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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Battle Royal

IT is the habit of the American nation to throw itself with zeal into living. From its beginings it has been avid of experience,—avid of adventure in the early pioneering days when the expansion of the nation traveled a road of constant hazards; avid of achievement when the conquered wilderness lay fallow to development; avid of success when accomplishment began to be measured by material rather than physical triumphs. To the American nature indifference is inhibited both by the tradition of the past and the practice of the present. Despite the sporadic outcropping of idleness on the part of the leisured class, and despite the wide diffusion of well-being throughout the country, there still maintains in America an eager attitude toward life, a belief in the beauty and efficacy of exertion, a superb disdain of obstacles. The buoyancy that foreigners used to remark in our national outlook has sobered to be sure, but sobered only from boastful optimism to a less proud but no less firmly grounded confidence, a belief in life, and especially American life. It is still robust enough to withstand the slings and arrows of the disaffected few who are discovering in American civilization bitter disappointment. The temper of the American people still denies the vehement dejection of those who during the past few years have turned disillusioned eyes on what they deem the fatuous self-satisfaction of their countrymen. But as yet it remains undiscriminating. The *Saturday Evening Post* even today more nearly reflects the reaction of the average American to his world than does the disgruntlement of "Main Street."

We have small doubt that the pessimists and the critics will have hard sledding of it still for some time to come, for if there has arisen in our midst a group that somberly looking on the civilization about it finds it narrow, and bound, and ugly, there are new forces come to power that make directly against the prevalence of an open facing of conditions. We refer, of course, to the movie which in its way is preaching a gospel radically hostile to dissatisfaction. For it continues the tradition of "sweetness and light" which the novel has made a beginning of dropping.

The movie, of course, is still largely adjusted to the taste from which fiction in its more sophisticated aspects has graduated—to the liking for the love story in the crude, for the tale of Western adventure, for the recital of business success, for the apotheosis of American manhood and womanhood in the round of its duty. It likes to present virtue triumphant and evil duly defeated, and it admits no possibility of wrong coming out on top in a maladjusted world. Its doctrine of success is no less uncompromising than that of the *Saturday Evening Post*, its belief in "gladness" quite as unashamed as that of "Pollyanna," and its obduracy to fact no more tempered than that of the most exaggerated romance. And the movie is reaching thousands who never read a novel and instilling in them the same roseate, or romantic, or fantastic view of life that so long enforced the optimism of the more bookish portion of the nation. It will be hard going against it for the realistic novel.

Anomalous, indeed, that at the time that the more sophisticated part of the reading public is being brought to receptivity of an unglossed view of life, a far greater public is being steeped in a romanticized conception of American existence. Curiously we are renewing on a vaster scale the education in optimism which the American people have hitherto imbibed through literature. Here is a whole art that is being adapted to the crude point of view to which only the least important part of the craft of fiction was given. Surely our sober realists, who would have their fellow-countrymen look their own civilization in the face, have much to contend against.

Their battle must be extended to the realm of the screen as well as of literature if American thought is to take on the color of reality. The American will remain an optimist, the fortunate circumstances of his national life ensure that. But both literature and the movies must see to it, as far as they can, that his optimism is rooted in truth and not in unthinkingness.

Holiday in Purple

By ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH

BENEATH the high solemn dusk of Westminster
What is this little bustle, these smothered giggles among the tombs,
This petty flouncing of skirts and wagging of coat-tails
Before the vast emptiness of death?
Who should it be but Samuel Pepys, gentleman,
With his wife and her servant (who sings to the flute)
And Bab and Betty his cousins from the country
And his boy (who knows how to dance)
All peering and screeching at the body of Queen Katherine of Valois,
Shown them for a shilling as a special favor?
Samuel Pepys is thirty-six years old today. It is an occasion.
He turns back his ruffles. He touches the mummy.
The cousins squawk, his French wife takes to her smelling salts,
The maid cries "La, sir! you never would!"
In a pleasing stir and bustle, very merry,
Mr. Pepys of the Admiralty pecks the dry black mouth of the body.
What a man he is with the ladies! but by all means let us get out into the sunshine!
Faugh! how cold the place is! what a smell there is of death!
He packs them into a hackney coach. "That's what all your fine wenches and madams must come to!"
Shrills Mrs. Pepys, head out of the coach door, yet even her hungry jealousy never guessing
That Mr. Samuel Pepys is walking on a pavement of dreams
With the touch of a queen's mouth on his lips.

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Outline of a Journalist

By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

IF you search modern history you will not discover a more seemingly incongruous couple than Ralph Waldo Emerson and Herbert George Wells. Arm in arm in the Elysian fields they would awaken laughter, and it is hard to decide which would be the more uncomfortable, Emerson in a Wellsian hockey game or involved in one of those determined sexual irregularities which Wells so loves to depict, or H. G. in a cloudy mist of transcendentalism sitting with Thoreau, Alcott, and Emerson under the elms of Concord. And yet this incongruous pair must be ranked jointly as perhaps the most effective preachers of perfectibility since the French Revolution.

The idea of the perfectibility of man is not so much a theory as a reaction. It represents the primal growth impulse of the animal set free in man by favoring circumstances and finding, like all man's impulses, a theory in which to express itself. New soil, new ideas, escape from tyranny or privilege or constriction sets the buoyant human spirit dreaming of unlimited possibilities. Plagues, anarchy, disaster are followed by ideas of depravity, atonement, and self-denial. Optimism and pessimism have their roots in geography, history, and biology. The puppy frisks, the bird sings, the caged lion sulks—and there is a human analogy in Shelley, lyric with conceptions of freedom; Dickens, gamboling in sheer richness of living; Byron, sulking in a megalomania of the imagination.

It is not easy to find a rational system in Emerson's optimism, but it is easy enough to see why he was optimistic. When he was not contemplating his own soul freed from the shackles of Calvinism, he looked Westward to boundless opportunity for the individual strong enough to live a self-controlled life. His New England intellect, the product of natural selection working upon a picked race, felt its own self-sufficiency and saw nothing except physical hardship and the wrong will of inferior men to prevent the perfectibility of the Emersonian type. He did not trouble himself much, not so much as Thoreau, with the weaker stocks, the shanty Irish whose descendants a century later were to rule Boston; his hypothesis was the perfection of the selected individual, and if some of us lived Emerson instead of misreading him, we might still justify his hope.

Wells, spiritually his antithesis, intellectually is his brother, half a century removed. Science has sped faster than time in that half century, and Wells, born from the serving classes, glimpsed its possibilities for the remedying of a social state that had pinched him cruelly. Emerson assumes a world more or less like Concord, with a living easily earned, and opportunity for ministers, philosophers, or pencil makers equally to exercise their will to be perfect men. Unfortunately, Concord was on its way to be a suburb of Boston instead of an outpost of Utopia, but that was a hazard which waits upon all philosophers. Wells, two generations later, must start further behind. He has the inequitable conditions of modern and specifically European men to wrestle with, first privilege and then the injustices and stupidities of industrialism. He sees that England must be turned upside down before a cockney can live in Concordian equality with his more privileged neighbors. But there is science to make wealth accessible to all, journalism to spread reforming doctrines, history to prove that states which keep down their H. G. Wellses always collapse, ordinary logic

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to show that a little clear thinking can make marriage function, wars cease, children be better bred, and mankind far happier and more hopeful than ever in Concord. And so, for different reasons, and with different means in view, he, too, becomes a perfectibilitarian. Emerson would have read and understood "The War of the Worlds," "Tono Bungay," and "The Outline of History" far better than many contemporary critics. He would have seen instantly, and approved, the consistency of the philosophy that runs through them all. Whether he would have agreed with the Wellsian technique of reform or welcomed the Wellsian ideal man, is another question.

I am not trying to demonstrate similarity between the sage of Concord and the voice of London; all I wish is to show that like athletes with very different techniques they have played on the same side of the great game between man and nature. They are both optimists, both believers that the curve of change is upward, not downward. But when this has been stated, the difference between them becomes more significant than the resemblance, especially for H. G. Wells, the subject of this essay. I find the best clue to this difference in the just written preface to the new complete edition of the Works of H. G. Wells.* He has had time to write, and now he has an opportunity to survey all that he has written, and here is his conclusion, for which I beg a most careful reading:

He wished, he says, "to satisfy an overpowering need to know—to know personally, to get hold of the hang of life as one saw it, with that clearness, that sense of achieved possession, which, he found, only writing down could give. . . . Certain ideas appear very early and develop. There is, for example, a profound skepticism about man's knowledge of final reality. . . . This line of thought leads to the recognition that such ideas as the idea of Right and the idea of God may also prove to be relative and provisional, that they are attempts to simplify and so bring into the compass of human reactions what is otherwise humanly inexpressible. . . . Another idea is the idea of a synthetic Collective Mind, arising out of and using and passing on beyond our individual minds. . . . It is the writer's belief that human society is now undergoing changes more rapid and more profound than have ever happened to it before. . . . Himself a child of change, . . . escaping only by very desperate exertions from a life of servitude and frustration, . . . he is still enormously aware of and eager to understand and express, the process of adaptation, destruction, and reconstruction . . . that is going on all about us. . . . Even in his novels his characters . . . are attempting desperately to understand, and still more desperately to thrust at and interfere with change. . . . The writer confesses his profound disbelief in any permanent or perfect work of art. All art, all science, and still more certainly all writing are experiments in statement. There will come a time for every work of art when it will have served its purpose and be bereft of its last rag of significance. . . . This edition is a diary of imaginations and ideas. . . . To the questions, 'Do you believe in God?' 'Do you believe in nationality?' 'Do you believe in individualism, in socialism?' the writer shows himself as often disposed to answer 'yes' as 'no.' One cannot give precise answers to indefinable questions. . . . You will find the writer . . . telling of just the sort of God . . . he believes in, and just the sort that he repudiates and denies. Yet . . . he is . . . surprised at his own general consistency."

Answering indefinable questions was, of course, Emerson's specialty, and whether he ever gave thought to his ultimate consistency is questionable. It certainly would not have surprised him to discover it! And here is a vital difference. Wells is sure of nothing ultimate, all is experiment; but of the validity of experiment he is certain, and therefore of a possible certain and fortunate result. Emerson's essays, one must believe, were felt as an end in themselves. They were ideals in the platonic sense—beautiful things accomplished toward which men might, and he believed, would approach. But the novels and tales and essays of Wells are all means to an end, experimental, indurable, to be "bereft of the last rag of significance" when the validity or invalidity of their ideas passed into human experiment. The poison gas and airplanes of "The War of the Worlds" and "The Sleeper Awakes" are mere literary curiosities already—so will it be with his character studies, his social ideas, his plots, and his style. This theory of literature accounts for much in Mr. Wells and in a generation which may be called Wellsian as justly as Shavian.

For leaving aside the philosophical aspects of this relative view of life, it is clear that when it comes to contemporary criticism which, as he says, is often vitiated by an aloofness to the personal equation, the Wellsian theory of art is bound to have immediate effects on the writer. This theory holds that all writing is journalism, whose business it is to report as accurately as may be what seems to be happening, with full consciousness that the thing is an experiment. It is the theory of the editorial, the special article, the propaganda novel, and other *genres* familiar in contemporary writing. But with this difference. Mr. Wells feels good journalism to be of the highest importance; it possesses "that clearness, that sense of achieved possession, which only writing down can give." Here is a new defence of modernism, in a theory of writing which attempts to justify the very impermanence and topicality which wiseacres have cursed in our literature; and a new standard of criticism by which the age can be convicted of failure to achieve its own ideals.

But let us stick to Mr. Wells. How much better one understands both his defects and his virtues after this honest and penetrating statement. It is a commonplace to say that he has no style in the literary sense, although all acknowledge a fluency amounting to grace, and a flexibility of prose capable of adaptation to mathematical theory or the involutions of the human spirit. He has no style because style has for its chief attribute that beauty which comes from final expression, and Mr. Wells has seldom desired final expression. He has thought rapidly and written rapidly, catching this day's appearance of truth with perfect knowledge that tomorrow's may be different and must be caught again. He is consistent as a daily paper is consistent, approximating in a year what one group of men think significant in life, but reissued each day with different views of the universe. Paradise Losts are not written this way, nor King Lears—and it is notorious that Mr. Wells does not highly estimate the authors of these two attempts to fix the truth. He estimates no poet highly; and in himself has only so much poetry as must inhere in a powerful intellect æsthetically sensitive when not otherwise concerned.

Indeed it might be fair to ask whether Mr. Wells believes in journalism as the highest good because he is not a poet; or whether he is not a poet because his whole being is absorbed in journalism. A poet must have faith in absolutes; he cannot make beauty if he believes it to be fleeting, whatever he may say in his poem. His poem he must believe in, whatever he thinks in philosophy. And for a man of great literary power to subscribe to the utilitarian view of literature—that it serves the ideas it embodies and then, like a rag, disintegrates—is, if he speaks from his heart, to be just such a writer as Mr. Wells—effective, fluent, unpolished, sometimes slipshod, and though often excellent, never beautiful, nor in the best sense fine. His opposite, Anatole France, who did not believe in the perfectibility of man, but was sure of the perfectibility of style, is infinitely his superior as a stylist—though quite possibly inferior in immediate serviceability to man.

And this is why the Works of Mr. Wells prove to be of surprisingly high level of excellence, exceeding in interest, in competence, and in their cumulative effect of social ideas worked out from every angle, the writing of perhaps any other contemporary, with the possible exception of Shaw, and yet yielding no single great book. The best are all like his history—interesting, significant, influential, and yet clearly experiments to be discarded when the life has been sucked from them. That other experimentalist, Shaw, has beaten him here. But then Shaw is an Irishman. He has been less consistent than Wells, and therefore, in a literary sense, more successful, for in despite of cynicism he has sought the final phrase to express change in humanity.

Thus if we are to assess Mr. Wells we must take him on his own basis of valuation. It is useless to pick out single stories of high merit—"The Invisible Man," for example, with its admirable narrative, "The War of the Worlds," with its wonderfully controlled fancy, or "Marriage," which is certainly one of the best idea-stories of the century. You cannot make a silk purse masterpiece for all times from any one of these. Wells did not wish it, and he has not made it. Nor is it useful to make the hackneyed distinction between his earlier romances of science and his later social philosophies, saying as one used to say of Henry James, that his earlier manner would have led to greatness. This is nonsense. His earlier manner led where it was inevitably pointed, to his later manner. Substantially all his social ideas are implicit in his first fantastic stories, and it is not necessary to read the Fabian essays contemporary with them, as published in Volume IV of the new edition, for a careful reader to see in "The Time Machine," "Dr. Moreau's Island," and "The War of the Worlds" all the hopes and fears of humanity which later come out from romance into realism with no more than a natural increase in scope and explicitness. Wells was a skilled writer from the first; he remained a journalist to the last; literature—if by literature we mean a final expression of anything, even change—was not in his purview. He did not want it.

He must be assessed as journalism is assessed, for its skill as such, for its effectiveness, for its influence. And the success of Wells, so regarded, is amazing. He has had dull books, mistaken books, like "God, the Invisible King," where he strayed into metaphysics and was lost, trivial books—but an astonishing pressure of ideas is constant throughout his works from first to last, with a momentum that carries on to really triumphant conclusions. With never a single masterpiece, he has "got over" his ideas, as the current slang has it, and done as much as any individual, and more than all but a few, to direct the current of popular thinking within the straight limits in which such direction is possible. He is not a great artist, not a great thinker, not a great novelist, not a great satirist. A great writer he certainly is.

But experiment must lead somewhere, and all of Wells's laboratory exhibits of humanity—from his demonstrations of the egoism of nationality, through his proofs of the stupidity of the unscientific, down to his almost pathetic attempts to establish first, last, and always a policy in which free love can become moral—all are futile if men will not play his game. Indeed, from this point of view, it is questionable which of the two idealists—Wells and Emerson—is the more naïve in his fixed belief that anything can be made of this poor human creature if the handling is right.

Emerson at least understood that the will to be perfect did not necessarily rise from opportunity. He knew more of the moral nature than Wells, having ethics in his blood, and his whole effort may be regarded as an attempt to further the self-development of a good will in man. Unfortunately he was hypothesizing for a peculiar people, in which strong will was common, and a will to be right, as they saw the right, congenital to the point of disease. His ideas degrade themselves when absorbed by inferiors into a sentimental idealism which substitutes the will for the deed. A brood of delusive religions has sprung from his teaching, and an ethical system that denies realities when they are not agreeable. Within the circle of his own kind, his ideas keep their fruitful soundness.

Wells guesses that the will to be perfect will follow the means, and it is to be feared he often guesses wrong. In his negatives he is nearly always right, for he is far closer to observable realities than Emerson, and never in danger of thinking that industrialism can be countered by retiring to the country. Where Emerson preaches, Wells legislates; and if this sorry scheme of things were to be refashioned for the present populations, Wells would be the safer engineer. Emerson would be strong on advice, but weak in the transportation systems.

Yet it is to be feared, again, that Wells does not allow enough for human depravity. For all his emancipation, Emerson, like Hawthorne, had a lively sense of the tendency downward which their ancestors had felt to be the most important fact about the human race. Hawthorne believed that for individuals it was inescapable; Emerson thought that it could be willed out of existence. But Wells is passionately fond of the full-blooded animal, and will not sacrifice any of its instincts, particularly the procreative, in order to make perfectibility theoretically more sure. He is eighteenth century in his fundamental belief that when we once see reason, and can use reason without the let of poverty and the hamper of bad education, the problem will be solved. Or as Tennyson, sentimentalizing a bit in the way of his century, put it (with a different meaning for "highest")—

We needs must love the highest when we see it.

It is easier, in short, to conceive of his social legis-

*The Works of H. G. Wells. Atlantic Edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1924. 28 volumes. $8.50 a volume.

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lation in practice than in Emerson's self-reliance operating in a world of over souls, but one is skeptical of the final result in either case. The two conceptions are, as Wells says of Newtonian space and syllogistic reasoning, "simplifications of a more subtle and intangible reality."

However that may be, H. G. has woven a broad fabric all of one pattern, though of many colors and occasional misses in the weave, an impressive social contribution, which, once removed from the literary categories and regarded simply as the social function of writing, must entitle him to more consideration than the nose-tilting connoisseurs of the arts have been willing to bestow. We will not compare such a writer with a Shakespeare or a Shelley, for in defiance of Mr. Wells' definition of literature, we do not admit that the two are comparable, and unhesitatingly assert a permanence of beauty, barring the haps of time and chance, which has a value apart from and probably above any social philosophy whatsoever. But if one must choose for its absolute value in these decades between pure art in the second grade and pure journalism as exemplified in Mr. Wells, one chooses the journalism.

The god of literature is a jealous god and accepts no excuses of social service rendered. In his temple Wells will never be worshipped. Beauty, broadly interpreted, must be an end in itself if beauty is to be served. Any more immediate purpose, such as teaching men how to organize a state, or control their own desires, has a way of rotting like old plaster and bringing down the whole edifice. Let us not call Wells by the name he does not desire then, of artist, but preacher-journalist; and who will say that his services are not greater than all the professed æstheticists of this particular generation? We are committed in an industrial period either to social amelioration or collapse—one can see that without determining which is the more desirable; that is what many dreamers toying with beauty do not see. And for social amelioration—which, if he is right and man can be perfected by reason, will make beauty possible, Wells has been a prime mover, counting in popular thought perhaps more than far greater philosophers and all the preachers of all the churches combined.

Russian Pictures

THE LAND OF THE FATHERS. By SERGEY GUSSIEV-ORENBURGSKY. New York: The Dial Press. 1924. $2.50.

Reviewed by COUNT ILYA TOLSTOY

GUSSIEV-ORENBURGSKY does not belong to the type of modernists who put on some kind of prismatic eyeglasses and see everything in their own individual light and colors. Neither is he a romantic. The life he describes is not gilded with rays of artificial light. He does not depict things he imagines, but as a realist he gives us pictures of the true life that he lived through himself and certainly knows. Every realistic writer reflects the sphere of life with which he is familiar. As Poushkine, Turgeniev, and Tolstoy immortalized the life of Russian country nobility; as Dostoievsky represents the life of the middle class; as Maxim Gorky was the poet of the tramp—so Gussiev-Orenburgsky reflects the life and psychology of the Russian country clergy.

The plot of the story is somewhat primitive. The main figures are two country priests—Father Ivan and Father Matvey and their wives. Both families are unhappy. The wife of Ivan threatens to leave him and to retire to a nunnery. At the same time the young wife of Father Matvey, "freezing from the stillness and blackness of her life," runs away to the city. Matvey comes to his friend, Ivan, and asks him for assistance. The two friends rush on a troika to the town. Ivan finds the pretty Pavlinka in the company of the emancipated daughter of a rich merchant and some of her radical friends and tries to persuade her to return to her husband. Quite unexpectedly the priest finds out that Pavlinka loves him. He also realizes that he always cherished her, but never dared to admit this feeling even to himself. Finally, after a short moral struggle, Ivan makes up his mind to abandon priesthood and to commence a new free life with the woman he loves.

The reader would certainly expect some great dramatic moments and psychological effects in the development and in the climax of this story. One could easily imagine and build up a whole long series of doubts and hesitations of a priest, who "betrays the oath, given to God himself," and takes the wife of his most intimate friend. Many a writer would create out of it powerful drama. But not so with Orenburgsky. He knows his people and his veracity prevents exaggeration. He knows also how scholastic and superficial is the education they receive in the seminary and how little they believe in orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationalism, those three corner-stones of pre-war Russia, that every priest was supposed to preach on on every occasion.

As every Russian priest, Father Ivan considered his priesthood as a business and never had any religious doubts or scruples and this not because he believed in the rites and superstitions of the church, but merely because he never thought of that; and he abandoned priesthood not fleeing from hypocrisy and falsehood, but under the influence of an emancipated young woman, who, together with her light-minded companions, "had cast away all the prejudices of their fathers and broken the partitions dividing the rich and the poor, the aristocrats and the slaves."

Reading this book one longs for more elevating ideals, for higher thoughts. Being a Russian, I feel sorry for the utter darkness of the remote Volga province, as described by Gussiev-Orenburgsky, and I would wish him to put here and there some bright spots, some of those characteristics of the Russian people, that were described with so much love and truthfulness by some of our great writers such as

A bookman's fantastic illustration of Columbus discovering America, from a woodcut of 1494.
From "The English-Speaking Nations," by G. A. Morris and S. L. Wood (Oxford University Press).

my father, Tolstoy, and Turgeniev. It seems that Orenburgsky overlooked some of the best moral qualities of the Russian people.

However, I must agree that Mr. Orenburgsky knows his world and that the background of his story is real and true. He faithfully describes the helpless struggle for land of the Russian peasantry against their heartless exploiters and plunderers, the reasons that caused the discontent of the Russian working people and the revolution of 1917, the superficial idealism of the new-born middle class, and finally the lack of influence and the stagnancy of the Russian clergy.

To those who are interested in the provincial life of remote Russia the book of Gussiev will give a truthful picture. But I wish to warn the reader that this book was written by its author on a gloomy day. The only glimpse of hope that the writer seemed to see among the clouds, the "new life," as he calls it, has now proved to be a delusion and brought Russia to her ruin.

Closing the volume one inevitably comes to the conclusion that it takes much higher humanitarian ideals than those of Karl Marx and Engels to bring real freedom, equality, and happiness to this world.

Simplicity, Farewell!

THE BEST BRITISH SHORT STORIES OF 1924. Edited by EDWARD J. O'BRIEN AND JOHN COURNOS. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co. 1924. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

IN considering the short story, Mr. O'Brien disposes of the problem of definition thus: "P. S.—A short story is a story which is short; "but the conscience of his co-editor is less easy and in an interesting prefactory dialogue he grapples with the extremely difficult problem of finding a characteristic common to the extremely diverse materials with which he is dealing and yet sufficiently fundamental to serve as a criterion for judging what is a short story and what is not. He recognizes, of course, that the same forces of disintegration which have affected the form of the novel have been at work upon the short story too, and that they have affected it in a manner almost precisely similar. He wishes, however, to find some constant difference (aside from length) which still distinguishes the one from the other and he finds this difference to lie in the fact that the short story tends to treat chiefly the climaxes while the novel gives almost equal attention to merely contributory things, so that while the effect of the one is intensive that of the other is cumulative, and while the one has a more definite finality the other is more complete. But such a distinction, while it will apply well enough to stories like those of De Maupassant seems, as he admits, hardly applicable to some of the most striking of contemporary stories and when he passes to a discussion of the real significance of the story in its modern form he is compelled to speak of things which are equally characteristic of the novel—especially of the fact that, "The sense of action rests no longer in the external sphere but in the subconsciousness." Perhaps, as he suggests, if the word "action" is understood in this sense, the short story will still be seen to deal chiefly with climaxes, but to the average reader, at least, the similarity existing between it and the novel will seem more important than the differences.

This shifting of the center of interest which Mr. Cournos discusses is not, so it seems to me, essentially a new and surprising phenomenon but rather a logical step in the process which has been going on since stories were invented. The most primitive kind of tale is, of course, merely a series of events which happened to no particular person and for no particular reason: "Once upon a time there was a man walking in a forest and he met a giant"; but the development of the story has been steadily away from emphasis upon action to emphasis upon the things which surround it. We get first of all, in the fable, the moral of the action and then, very gradually, emerges the individual character of the persons, introduced at first merely to make the action seem more real, but gradually trading places with events until in many novels the action exists only to illustrate the character instead of being itself the center of interest. Finally appears the tendency to get behind character into the forces which mold it and Freudianism appears, not to originate this tendency, but merely to emphasize it and to give it a technique perhaps a little too facile for the best results. There are, of course, other tendencies, the tendency observable in its most extreme form in the stories of Max Beerbohm, for example, where the personality of the author is the most important thing, but at least the whole movement is away from concretely observed things and in the direction of all sorts of intangibilities. The author deals with things seen, heard, or done only because clinging about them are things which have no concrete existence but which he can manage to get hold of by treating of the definite events or objects to which they cling. We shall grow a little giddy if we try to think of this process carried one step further, of analyses of analysis and of treatments of the sub-subconsciousness which lies somewhere below the level yet reached, but it is not at all impossible that all this will seem when the time comes at least as clear as that which we are at present investigating.

To me it seems folly to discuss the question whether or not the subjective tendency here under discussion has gone too far or not far enough, because it is not primarily a literary tendency which could be influenced to any important extent by the resolution to be more concrete or more subtle. It is merely the result of the development of the human mind which has proceeded step by step away from the observations of the senses and, trying to

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to get behind them, has hoped vainly at each step that at last it has found the ultimate meaning of things. Like a man engaged in opening one of those ingenious nests of Chinese boxes, each containing one a little smaller than itself, we lift each lid in the hope that we have at last come to the end but there is always an inner box to be investigated. Perhaps we shall some day suddenly realize that the ingenuity of the force which created the universe is, unlike the ingenuity of the Chinese, entirely without limit, and realizing that the number of boxes is infinite we shall regret despairingly that we did not rest content with the picture on the outermost lid. But we have already begun the game and no mere critical plea for a return to objectivity and the honest-to-goodness story will distract us. We have taken off too many covers and seen too many interesting things.

The excuse for such broad generalities in the review of a book lies in the fact that no critical observations more detailed or specific could be applied to materials so diverse as those contained in the volume under discussion. The editors of "The Best British Short Stories of 1924" have collected twenty-six tales by such writers as E. M. Delafield, Caradoc Evans, William McFee, Katherine Mansfield, W. Somerset Maugham, Dorothy Richardson, and Edith Sitwell as well as by other lesser known authors, and though all interesting, they belong, of course, to no one school and have as many different qualities as they have names. Yet it is true of almost every one that not only is the story told for some ulterior purpose but also that even when character is the chief interest the aim is not so much to describe it as to discover its hidden springs. Miss Delafield, for example, tells of a mother who persuades her daughter to return to the husband whom she has deserted; Mr. McFee lays his scene upon an ocean liner making its way along the South American coast and hints at a wild tale of smuggled gold, but the effect of neither story is at all what one might guess from this description. Miss Delafield, beginning and ending with the statement that she is, thank God, a modern, is interested chiefly in revealing the unconscious histrionic sense which is the driving force behind what her people would call their consciences and Mr. McFee's story is a Conradesque study of the deepest springs of character. Similar things are true of almost all of the stories and in many the plot is merely alluded to rather than told. To anyone familiar with modern literature the stories are clear, interesting, and significant but one who came to them without previous training would find many strangely vague and unsatisfactory.

"What Kind of a Noyes—?"

SOME ASPECTS OF MODERN POETRY. By Alfred Noyes. Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1924. $2.50.

THE HIDDEN PLAYER. By Alfred Noyes. The same. $2.

Reviewed by William Rose Benet

I ADMIRE very much some of the poems of Mr. Alfred Noyes. A selection could be made from his numerous volumes that would definitely place him as one of the most musically original poets of our time. He has made a certain type of richly-colored fantastic ballad such as "Forty Singing Seamen," "Bacchus and the Pirates," "The Companion of a Mile," "Black Bill's Honeymoon," etc., peculiarly his own, and they delight me.

Mr. Noyes revivifies legend. His "Orpheus and Eurydice" seems to me one of the finest lyrical achievements of our time. In fact, the man is a far better poet than the critics of the day will allow. And for this he is, himself, chiefly to blame. He has written too much, his reach has frequently exceeded his grasp, and he has become absorbed in delivering a "message." Consequently a great many of his poems have degenerated into propaganda for his own particular vision of Christianity. He takes the pulpit. In "Some Aspects of Modern Poetry" he takes the pulpit again. He is going to save the age from its critical chaos, its lack of standards, its Bolshevism in the arts.

Mr. Noyes is dogmatic. He cannot understand why in our modern books we cry at one moment that we are agnostics, quite firmly assume the world to be meaningless, and then, in the next breath are thrilled, perhaps, by the sight of a sunset. But I do not see why that should so puzzle a human being among human beings. It seems to me that the last thing human beings are is logical and consistent. Agnosticism is simply a frank recognition of human inconsistency. Atheism appears to me to be a foolish dogmatism, but so does Mr. Noyes's insistence that all who do not believe in a God, or an Infinite Power, or a Great Idea, behind the universe are trivial if not wicked. "The great Idea baffles wit," said Emerson, and Mr. Noyes pays tribute to Emerson in this volume, fervent tribute.

> Nor art, nor power, nor toil can find
> The measure of the eternal mind,
> Nor hymn, nor prayer, nor church.

This postulates a God? Yes, but "the Boundless hath no form, and the Universal Friend doth as far transcend an angel as a worm." And just here is an explanation of the present phase through which poetry is passing. Those who were the "new poets" some ten years ago had grown tired of poetry's harping so much upon God in the Universe. Poetry, just as much as Science, was confronted by an apparently unanswerable Riddle as to why we were here and where we were going. There had been "intimations of immortality" but no more than intimations. Let us be honest with ourselves, said some of the poets; let us confine ourselves for awhile to describing what we can actually see, let us give the "cosmic" a rest, let us not arrogate to ourselves a greater insight into insoluble mysteries than that of the ordinary human being, let us no longer assume the robes of prophets, let us be ourselves without any highfalutin' airs. That, at any rate, is how I read the objectivity, the elimination of "message" that has become such a characteristic of modern poetry. And in this connection a quotation of what Bill Hoey of Hell's Kitchen is quoted in a recent magazine article as saying of Father Cashin, the Roman Catholic chaplain of Sing Sing, may not be impertinent:

> Lissen, fella, Cashin was the only guy who never threw the bull. When it looked as if nothin' this side of hell could save me Cashin was the only guy who didn't come around with a lotta bull about hopin'. Hell! They didn't have to tell me to hope. I didn't do nothin' else but hope.

There is an opinion from one of the masses,—a criminal, yes,—but in the last story of Mr. Noyes's volume of short stories, "The Hidden Player" he evinces some sympathy with criminals, at least with his Parson Chapman's sympathy for them. That is the way certain of us all too human beings regard a "message." I regret to say that we are not all so perfectly constituted that we can all be grateful for it. Most of us don't "do nothin' else but hope," some of us—a good many of us, if the truth were known—hide in our hearts certain personal revelations, but, especially if we are poets, we distrust expression of our more emotional moments. Mr. Noyes is fond of Tennyson, and takes up the cudgels for Tennyson throughout his volume of criticism. Well, Tennyson might have been voicing the true spirit of the present age when he said

> and though
> We are not now that strength which in old days
> Moved earth and heaven, that which we are we are,
> One equal temper of heroic hearts. . . .

A partial quotation; but many of Mr. Noyes's quotations are partial, in both senses. Perhaps I am the optimist. There is to me something extremely depressing in Mr. Noyes's "Some Aspects," not because he praises certain masters of another era, but because he seems to be so utterly unaware of anything of real moment that is being done in our own time.

Mr. Noyes is enraged by our time, especially by the poetry of our time. Of the only modern American poet he cites, Carl Sandburg, he displays as galling an ignorance as the ignorance of the versifying mayflies that disgust him so when they ridicule Tennyson. He displays an utter ignorance of the merits of James Joyce, whose "Ulysses" he roundly denounces in good set terms. He declares indeed, inferentially, that Mr. Joyce's "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" is "contemptible in every respect" and the praise of Joyce a "national disgrace." Nowhere does he mention names or titles, but those are the names and the titles.

The last shall be first, for this sudden outburst against Joyce comes in the last essay in Mr. Noyes's volume. "Ulysses" has been exhaustively discussed by far abler minds than mine, and I have read but fragments of it. Therefore I leave it to others to defend. But I did read "A Portrait of the Artist" at a time when I was quite removed from any literary atmosphere, quite out of touch with any babble of books and authors; and I read it without ever having heard of the author, or having the slightest idea, when I opened the book, of what it contained. It was not till some months later that I had any opportunity to find out anything at all about Joyce. I certainly was not influenced in my opinion of his work by the pronouncements of any clique or coterie. I therefore think my testimony at least honest. Well, my testimony is that "A Portrait of the Artist" is undoubtedly one of the great books of our time. It is—Mr. Noyes speaks of weighing his words, so I will weigh mine—a "work of genius." It is indubitably that, "demonstrably," as Mr. Noyes is fond of saying. To call it "contemptible in every respect" is to cancel one's claims to intelligence.

Elsewhere in his volume of critical essays, which are only mildly critical save when the terms "radical," "free verse," "Bolshevism," act as a red rag to Mr. Noyes's suddenly congested gaze and he is off on a rampage—elsewhere in this volume the poet has some shrewd true things to say upon the merits of the poetry of Emerson, Tennyson, Longfellow, Alice Meynell, Henley, Stevenson, and Austin Dobson—upon Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Shelley and Swinburne. He is chiefly concerned with a counter-attack upon modern critics who would belittle the achievement of these poets, especially of Tennyson and Longfellow.

In speaking of Stevenson, Mr. Noyes endeavors to prove that the verses in a "Child's Garden" bear a significance and present a symbolism which, it seems to me, were certainly not in the mind of the author at the time of their composition. He also underestimates Henley's "odes, anthems, and voluntaries," while adequately praising his powers of portraiture. Tennyson keeps recurring in almost every essay, until even the mind that, at the outset, found itself quite in sympathy with the defense of a master "out of fashion" begins to weary of Tennyson's perfections. Longfellow is greater in the ballads of King Olaf and in Scanderbeg than in anything Mr. Noyes quotes. But in his slighter essays on "Some Cambridge Poets" and on "James Thomson" this grand marshal of the heroic past suddenly becomes less oracular and more curiously pleasant, and his paper on "The Spirit of Touchstone" expounds a valid and interesting theory.

We wish the violent pulpiteering were absent from this volume, for Mr. Noyes knows great verse when he sees it, and can explain its merits. He takes much too seriously the lunatic fringe of contemporary poetic experimentation, and, as we have said, seems entirely blind to a certain solid amount of contemporary accomplishment. He frequently construes personal irritation as righteous wrath.

As for "The Hidden Player", "Bill's Phantasm" and "The Red Rat" are a species of cheap humor of which one would suspect that Alfred Noyes of "Some Aspects" as a logical result of his less controlled moments in "criticism." "The Very Careful Man" is a skit of greater merit. "The Fourth Generation" is hysterical twaddle. "The Wine Beyond the World" is thinly veiled, conservative propaganda, and "Confessional" and "Court-Martial" are only passable stories of the emotional and magazine type. "The Troglodyte" is better. On the whole, Mr. Noyes has demonstrated his ability to write stories acceptable to certain popular American magazines, and not much more.

And so we leave the poet. Mr. Noyes is a reckonable poet. He will continue to waste his energies in mere religiosity, will continuue to exercise his Messiah complex. He will leave to this generation a handful of poetry eventually to be recognized as genuine, original and refreshing. The rest is silence.

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Not An Angel

WAGNER AS MAN AND ARTIST. By ERNEST NEWMAN. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1924. $5.

Reviewed by HENRY T. FINCK

WHILE the late James Huneker was not a "perfect Wagnerite," he was one of the most eloquent exponents of the Bayreuth master's genius. Only once did he go astray, printing a violent onslaught on "Parsifal" at the time when this music drama—or "musical prayer-meeting" as it was called—had such an amazing vogue at the Metropolitan Opera House. Why he made this attack he frankly explained in a letter to me which may be found in the new volume of "Intimate Letters of Huneker" recently issued.

> You must think I'm mad! . . . I was enraged to see music like "Tristan" neglected for the "Parsifal" circus; hence my rather noisy and too pungent attack. You know I love Wagner too much not to revolt at certain methods of praising him, uncritical and vulgar, by the younger generation.

Ernest Newman, whom I have probably more frequently than any one else proclaimed as one of the ablest musical critics of this or any other age, seems to have been in a similar state of mind a decade ago when he penned his "Wagner as Man and Artist," of which the volume under review is a new and enlarged edition. He, too, was "mad" when he wrote his "noisy and too pungent attack" on Wagner the man; for an attack it is, pure and simple, as far removed from a fair and critical estimate of Wagner's real character as the opinions of Hanslick and the other ferocious critics of Wagner's music were in their day—estimates which everybody now laughs at.

The Introduction to Newman's volume does not tell what made him thus suddenly run amuck, but it is easy to read the reason between the lines and especially in the footnotes, which have been provided with the lavish prodigality of a German professor. Stated in one sentence it is that Newman got "mad" because W. Ashton Ellis Friedrich Glasenapp, and other perfect Wagnerites, had in their countless volumes of biography represented Wagner continuously and inexorably as an angel.

Now, Richard Wagner was certainly not an angel, except, possibly, of the species so amusingly described in Anatole France's "La Révolte des Anges." His autobiography, especially in its early chapters, includes pages which would have been suppressed had he or his amanuensis and second wife, Cosima, intended that he should be regarded by posterity as an angelic being. Why then rub in this admitted fact to the tune of 153 pages? Nobody has ever thought of doing such a thing for other composers who were not angels—such as Bellini, Liszt, Weber, and Debussy; or Beethoven, who owed his deafness, for which he has been so much pitied, to a disease due to dissolute habits and who was otherwise far from being a model man, although usually represented as such. Mr. Newman calmly remarks that "we smile now at the stories that are told of Beethoven's grossness and ill-breeding; but had we experienced the effect of these at first-hand we should certainly have voted him an impossible person to live with."

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Well, Ernest Newman was only fifteen years old when Wagner died and therefore cannot have suffered personally from that man's non-angelic traits; why not, therefore, "smile at" those, too? To put the matter in a nutshell, Newman, after making up his mind to show that Wagner was not an angel, went at his task not like a critic or a judge but like a lawyer who is retained to show up a man's character in the darkest possible colors.

How far Mr. Newman goes in his biased attitude toward Wagner the man, is shown by the fact that he tries to convey the impression that Wagner himself was to blame for the hostile attitude of the influential Viennese critic, Dr. Hanslick! They were friends at first, we are told, but Wagner subsequently grossly insulted his former "friend" by holding him up to ridicule in the character of the ludicrous Beckmesser in the comic opera, "Die Meistersinger." But why, pray, should Wagner hold up to ridicule a "friendly" critic? As a matter of fact, Hanslick, from the start, damned Wagner with faint praise and from year to year he became more venomous and violent in his merciless attacks. If he did this because Wagner the man had not been nice to him personally he must have been the most contemptible critic that ever lived. I have a much higher opinion of Hanslick than Mr. Newman apparently has. Though I always loathed his opinions I realized that he was born an ultra-conservative champion of such composers as Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, and Brahms, quite unable to appreciate not only the revolutionary Wagner but all other modern composers who, like Liszt and Tchaikovsky, brought a new message to the musical world. He treated them quite as harshly as he did Wagner though they, dear kind hearted men as they were, had never dreamt of being personally disagreeable to him.

In the long quarrel between Wagner and his first wife, Minna, who did more than even the critics to embitter his life, Ellis and the other biographers familiar with all the documents, have usually sided strongly with Wagner. Mr. Newman does the opposite. He cannot deny, of course, that she was guilty of infidelity; she confessed it herself. But that was merely due to a "distracted state of mind," which Wagner—selfish brute though we are told he was—pardoned generously. But when she subsequently acted again and again like an infuriated hyena because "men will be men" and Wagner was a good deal of a man, Mr. Newman still remains her staunch champion. To others it seems strange that a guilty wife who could not afford to throw even a pebble should be applauded for starting whole avalanches of stones down on her husband's head while he was creating an immortal work.

Her wrath was directed particularly against the woman who helped to inspire the soul-stirring music of "Tristan and Isolde," Mathilde Wesendonck. She gave Wagner the "mental tending," the sympathy with and comprehension of his later music dramas which he had so long craved in vain. Undoubtedly he loved her passionately and she loved him, but there is no conclusive evidence that their love went to guilty extremes. With all the eloquence of his genius Wagner seeks to prove her innocence. If he lied, he "lied like a gentleman," to save a woman's reputation. Mr. Newman, on the contrary, summons all his literary eloquence to convey the impression that she was guilty.

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Mr. Newman's repeated assertion that he is "not taking sides against Wagner" seems a flagrant case of *qui s'excuse s'accuse*. If he was really anxious to show Wagner "as he was," why did he not devote a chapter, or at least a page, to instances of his infinitely tender feelings for animals and sympathy with their sufferings? Hans von Wolzogen has written a whole book on this subject. And instead of wasting so many dreary pages on the Jessie Laussot affair Mr. Newman could have given an infinitely better picture of the real Wagner if he had devoted a chapter, or at least a page, to illustrations of this admission he is obliged to make: "All accounts agree that with people who loved and looked up to him he was the most charming of men."

He would have been the most charming of men to all the world if the world had treated him as he deserved to be treated—he who had provided so much pleasure for all. If the persistent Wagner-baiting which was the fashion in the critical and professional world for several decades made him often the opposite of "charming," did these irritable moods, on which Newman loves to dwell, reveal the real Wagner? He probably "smiles at" the stories of Brahms's rudeness, "quite without reason," to Cornelius, Goldmark, Bilroth, Bülow, and others of his best friends and adorers; but when Wagner, so ill that he could work only an hour a day, hunted, persecuted, calumniated, lost his temper for a moment so that his best friends suffered, that, forsooth showed him to be a bad man!

Of all the stuff dished up in Newman's book the most contemptible is the tittle-tattle about the money Wagner borrowed from friends and squandered on riotous living. Inasmuch as his operas brought him only a pittance—he was forty-four years old and had written all but three of his stage works before a single one of them was sung in Vienna, Munich, or Stuttgart, while in other cities the performing rights brought him the pitiable trifles of $250 down to $25—he could have *never* had a riotous time such as his artistic soul now and then craved unless he had called on his friends for help. These friends were immortalized by their small sacrifices, as most of them were sensible enough to admit.

To reveal the real Wagner, Mr. Newman, instead of devoting so many pages to the sacrifices made by these willing helpers, should have given a chapter, or at least a page, to showing eloquently what a tremendous, what an unspeakable sacrifice Wagner was making of *himself* all his life. Had he followed the urgent advice of Minna to write more operas in the popular "Rienzi-Meyerbeer style," he might have revelled in wealth unprecedented in the musical world—the wealth he so passionately craved. Instead of so doing, he refused to budge an inch from his lofty ideals. Though nobody wanted his "Wagnerian" music dramas, he kept on writing them and making them more and more Wagnerian. That meant poverty, conflict, disappointment, venomous criticism, failure; but with an artistic heroism little short of sublime he refused to swerve from his path. *There* lies the true character of Richard Wagner! Compared with that monumental fact and achievement the traits with which Newman paints his character appear as mere peccadilloes, trifles, bagatelles.

Following the bad example of Mr. Newman I shall not dwell on the good things in his book, the second part of it, I mean, although this seems a pity, for his comments on the operas of Wagner, whom he sets forth as the Shakespeare of music, are admirable. A word may be added, however, about Appendix A, which treats of "The Racial Origin of Wagner."

Like Sonneck and others, Newman has decidedly ignored the Napoleonic "la recherche de la paternité est interdite." After going over the ground again, in the light of recent evidence, he is more inclined than he was ten years ago to believe that R. W. was, or at least believed himself to be, the son of his stepfather, Geyer. How Jim Huneker, who believed that Wagner, like most great men (he humbly excepted himself) was a Jew, would have rejoiced at this turn of affairs. But alack and alas! a German named Bournot has written a book in which he traces back the history of the Geyer family to the year 1700, establishing "the poignant facts" that all the Geyers were of the evangelical faith, that most of them were Protestant church organists, and that all of them married maidens of "unimpeachable German extraction."

A Hundred Years of It

THE STORY OF AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER. By RICHARD HOOKER. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1924.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

TO the recent and growing collection of newspaper biographies, "The Story of an Independent Newspaper," an account of one hundred years of the *Springfield Republican*, is an important and distinctive addition. The book is worthy of its subject. Without studied effort it gives a modest yet properly appreciative account of what for continuity of high purpose and achievement makes the *Republican* unique among American newspaper institutions.

For its first ninety-one years the ownership, policy, and management of the *Republican* were in the hands of the three generations of Samuel Bowleses. From the founding of the paper by the first Samuel Bowles in 1824, it continued to be dominated in turn by his son and grandson of the same name. The history of the paper is therefore a sequence of biographies of men whose purpose and interests related them closely to public affairs. As the *Republican* early transcended its functions as a local newspaper and became national in its affiliations and influence, its story and that of our national development after the early days of the republic are intimately woven. The closing chapters deal with the *Republican* as it is today; they form a fourth biography—an unintentional one—and for that reason the more illuminating. It is the autobiography of the fourth editor and present titular head of the *Republican*, Richard Hooker, the author.

For the history of the *Springfield Republican* vividly reflects its historian. Into Hooker's interpretation are blended the drama, the courage, the sincerity, of American journalism at its best. He has given us a picture of an American profession, art, and craft as it has been in one instance and might conceivably have been far more generally.

It is Hooker who writes of the first Samuel Bowles: "He had the courage to believe that the way to win was to produce a better newspaper." No finer tribute could be written for an editor, nor one more revealing about its author. One finds the silver cord of fine practice in such bits as this: "In his correspondence he (W. S. Robinson, the *Repub-*

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lican's Boston correspondent in the fifties) often severely criticised men and measures favored by the *Republican* in its editorials. Such freedom has been the paper's traditional policy toward correspondents . . . in whose integrity it placed confidence even if its judgment and theirs did not always agree." And: "It was his (the second Samuel Bowles) creed that a newspaper man should not accept public office and should keep himself free from every entanglement that might affect his independence."

Temptation came the way of the Bowleses as it does to every editor whose influence is worth a farthing. Invariably they stood by their principles in a quiet, unassuming way that reflected an inner compulsion rather than a seeking for plaudits. How curiously remote appears today the announcement of the first Samuel Bowles that he would enlarge his paper to meet his readers' complaint "that advertising had so increased as frequently to reduce the amount of reading matter below that to which they felt entitled."

Under the third Samuel Bowles, the *Republican* on March 16, 1905, was the only paper in Massachusetts to print an account of the debate in the state legislature on compelling patent medicine manufacturers properly to label the contents of their nostrums—*every other daily in the state prized its patent-medicine advertising too highly*. In relating this episode Mr. Hooker briefly exchanges his rôle of chronicler for that of fellow-publisher by courteously footnoting that such uniqueness would doubtless not be the *Republican's* today. The fact is, however, that analogous suppressions are still current in the leading journalistic luminaries of the Bay State. And more recent than the above was the discovery of the New Haven railroad's president, Mr. Charles S. Mellen, that it could not buy or bully the support of the *Republican*, whose editor, he admitted, was "a dyspeptic crank, but honest." He had no difficulty in finding other Massachusetts moulders of opinion whose digestion was unimpugnable.

There is no evidence that the light of the *Springfield Republican* has dimmed in its fourth generation. It is its present pilot who speaks with proper pity of the present-day consolidated newspaper "in which freedom from strict party affiliation has sometimes faded into a colorless although commercially prudent editorial neutrality, wholly alien to . . . progress," and who takes pains to quote the second Bowles's tribute to a fellow worker as "both an honor and an ornament to the profession of journalism." If the present-day *Republican* has adopted the externals of the current age—even to the extent of eight pages of Sunday comics—has yielded to a somewhat discordant and tawdry syndicated magazine section, and has bowed to what it conceives to be the necessity of printing automobile "reading notices," the essential spirit of a century is unaltered. The *Republican* is today wholly objective and unbiased in its treatment of news. In its editorial columns one finds a dispassionate and mellow search for the rock-bottom of truth. Well-reasoned, ably written, judicial, the editorials on the other hand lack vigor or extraordinary inspiration. The paper is less a crusader than a gentle philosopher and guide. So indeed it has always been—never a lone voice in any wilderness of temporary confusion; a leader, but never very far ahead of the crowd. Thus it opposed William Lloyd Garrison's and Wendell Phillips's earlier anti-slavery efforts, and consistently the *Republican* was never the first to strike conspicuously for the abolition of abuses within our body politic. It has blown the gentler zephyrs of reform, and while doing this from conviction and not for expediency it has happily found a policy which has proved practical and appropriate in its environment. The *Republican* has been typical in the best sense of the evolutionary method of American progress.

If the *Springfield Republican* is today less conspicuous than formerly in our national life it is for reasons that are largely mechanistic. America has grown, geographically and numerically, away from and beyond its Atlantic seaboard and is less subject to influences, whether individual or institutional, that once affected a smaller and more compact nation. It cannot be fairly said that the *Republican* today wields national influence as it did in the past. Spiritually it has made the most worth-while contribution to America which has been offered to our country by American journalism.

The Adventure Magnificent

MAGELLAN: His Life and Adventures by Land and by Sea. By ARTHUR S. HILDEBRAND. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1924. $3.

Reviewed by ROCKWELL KENT

Author of "Voyaging"

"OF the state of geography in the year 1493; of the work of Prince Henry the Navigator and how the Portuguese nation sought a route to the east. How Magellan came to the court at Lisbon; of Vasco de Gama's and other expeditions; and how Magellan enlisted for service in India. Of the voyage to India, and what transpired there. How the great city of Malacca was taken by Alfonso de Alburquerque. Of how Magellan went to the spice islands; and what happened there——." So, roughly, begins the table of contents; and so, packed with the promise of great adventure, of intrigue, of mutiny, of shipwreck, of rebellion, of disaster, of discovery, and final triumph, it continues.

Those were great times. Suddenly on the complacent states of Europe dawned the consciousness of the whole, vast, undiscovered world beyond their bounds, of unknown continents beyond the seas, of riches greater than thought, of trade and treasure that were his who reached them first. Discovery announced itself upon a world quite unequipped to follow it. Men's courage filled the gap. Out into seas beset with every real terror of the deep, and with the imagined horrors of the unknown, they blindly steered their silly coastal craft, accepting the threat of death and its appalling toll as but a necessary part of such adventuring. It was a "strike," the greatest that the world had known or can ever know, a stampede of gold-mad nations staking out seas and continents as claims. Greed?—the most colossal! And it spurred men to a pitch of courage that the world may never see again.

"Magellan": the age of great adventure, and the great adventurer! The pageantry, the blood and thunder of the stark events! God, what a book it ought to be! A stirring, rousing, glamorous book; a story that would lend to the most precise and unimaginative narrative the power of great drama, a natural drama that might stir the most prosaic writer's soul into abandonment. Turn to a bare narrative of those times; the stilted chronicles in Hakluyt carry the thrill of "Treasure Island." And the scenes! Read but the uncolored prose of the "Pilot Guide," and shudder at the naked facts about Magellan's strait. It would seem hard to tell the story of Magellan's life and make it unimpressive; yet it has been done.

It is difficult for a writer possessed of a personal grace of literary expression to divest himself of it when the stern occasion demands that he should. Mr. Hildebrand writes charmingly. On page 1, and we may safely judge of such a matter at the very beginning, occurs, to choose almost any single passage, this:

> The ships lie all one way, like sheep in the wind; the current gurgles along their sides, keeping the hawsers taut, and rolling and bumping the little short-boats under the high sterns that rise like unsteady leaning castles. Great banners are streaming.

One has written this who has heard the tide's sound along hollow wooden sides. And again in Chapter VIII. is borne out the impression that the writer knows and loves the sea:

> They pushed broad ridges of tumbling foam before their full broad bows; their high stern-works lurched and staggered, leaning and swinging, now on this side, now on that; they were broad and heavy and low in the waist, with short thick spars that hung forward over their heads, and sails that bulged and billowed; they tripped on their own skirts when the white crests caught up with them, and yawed alarmingly as they coasted down the steep leeward slopes;

Yet, save when the author's own sensitive impressions of the sea appear to grace his narrative, the very personal charm of his style, its impressionistic gaiety, disastrously affects the dignity of his great subject. By the suspected riches of historical material that is so lightly touched upon, by the drama that is forever promised and never achieved, the solemnity, the fervor that are always imminent and never reached, the reader is at last exasperated as at one who violates the cravings of a mood. Here, where we look for a picture of an age impressive with achievement, and of men dignified by courage, we are confronted by a puppet show, and at last behold our hero in a comic scene expire in the arms of Ponchinello—that most worthy scientist, the Signor Pigafetta.

Footnotes to History

CHRONICLES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. By MAUD WYNDHAM. Founded on the Correspondence of Sir Thomas Lyttleton and his Family. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1924. 2 vols. $10.

Reviewed by WILBUR C. ABBOTT

Harvard University

IF one needed proof that the great days of the great English families have passed or are passing, he might find it in the chronicles of those families which are now appearing, chiefly from the pens of their womenfolk who seem to be taking a melancholy pleasure in the recital of the past greatness of the houses to which they belong or of the class which they represent. From the archives of the Lyttleton family, from histories and diaries of the eighteenth century, the present author has drawn the chronicle of one of these families for the entertainment and the edification of the present generation in an admirable picture of the society in which the Lyttleton family made its way and its fortune.

Such volumes as these form interesting and often important contributions to history. They show, first of all, the connections between individuals and events which are too apt to be lost sight of in more formal accounts. They do not so much narrate as explain and interpret. They show in many cases the other side of the picture. They interest one in the warp rather than the woof of that fabric which we shall call history; they show on what the formal pattern was based: what holds it together: and how it was woven. More than that they serve to correct many accepted views of men and events. A man who seems to play a minor part is often revealed as a moving force in affairs; one who makes a great show in full-dress history is not seldom exhibited as a very different creature from his public counterfeit presentment. One perceives himself attaining a very different perspective as he reads these volumes; for history seems at once more human and less imposing a thing than he conceived.

The author of the present volume has done her work well. From her pages one gains a peculiarly clear picture not only of the Lyttleton family, but of the society in which it played its part. He gains, no less, much insight into the characters—and the character—of eighteenth century politics, for the Lyttletons were in the midst of it. And it is more than dead gossip. One needs only to read the chronicle of Admiral Smith to gain some idea of the navy and its deeds and misdeeds in that eventful period—and more than an idea. He gets the spirit of the service. Moreover there is here no inconsiderable amount which no one knew before these volumes appeared; for they are drawn in no small measure from unpublished material. They may be called "foot-notes to history."

A Suggestion

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*:

DEAR SIR:

FOR many years I have cherished two ambitions: (1) To be colorful; (2) to be helpful. With regard to the former I cannot, I fear, report much progress. The uses of the word are so confusing. Novels are colorful, plays are colorful, so are personalities and crowds and crossword puzzles. It is difficult to pick out the common element in all these so as to aim at it. Thus I feel rather blue about my prospects. But this is not the right color. I cannot hit the mark even by accident.

In regard to the second, I am doing fairly well. I thrill to the sound of that word service, and there are moments when I am so suffused with the spirit of helpfulness that you might almost mistake me for a Rotarian. This is one of them. How then, you ask—(at least I hope you do)—am I proposing to help you? Loyal to the spirit of service, I want to help you to help others. But how? you ask again.

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(Keep on asking. You must not go back on me now!) I want you, quite literally, to take a leaf out of the Women's magazines, the leaf or page devoted to Household Hints, for each of which the sender receives a dollar. You remember the sort of thing. Mrs. Smith, Kansas, Mo., informs a palpitating world that a wonderful way of removing ice cream stains from velvet is to rub them with a toothbrush dipped in vinegar. Well, my suggestion is that *The Saturday Review* should run a page of Literary Hints, for each of which you might offer—I do not say pay—the nominal sum of two dollars. There must be thousands of your readers who are as eager for tips on writing as any housekeeper is for suggestions looking towards cunning and colorful little salads. There must be many thousands more to whom two dollars is not to be sneezed at. Lastly, think how it would make your readers feel that they were all just one big happy helpful family, just a cozy group of one hundred thousand subscribers. In these days of organized intimacy this would make the paper popular. Just to give you an idea of the sort of thing I have in mind I enclose a specimen page.

Yours very truly,
CHARLES A. BENNETT

MINCED POETRY

The following is a simple recipe for a modern poem. Take three or four lines of prose of average length. Remove the capitals. Strain out all punctuation marks. Chop fine, arrange capriciously in little dabs on the page and send to *The Dial*. An asterisk or two will lend a pleasing decorative touch.

INSPIRATION

I have found that a few bay leaves laid end to end around the brow are more conducive to inspiration than the conventional wet towel.

SAVE YOUR STALE JOKES

Do not throw away your jokes when they become stale and tasteless. When steeped in gin or brandy I have found that they recover much of their pristine freshness and flavor.

HOW TO KNOCK SPOTS OFF AN EDITOR

If an editor persistently returns your offerings a good plan is to borrow a large sum of money, buy his magazine, and then write him a letter telling him that his services are no longer required.

YOUNGER GENERATION *EN CASSEROLE*

Take a couple of fresh youngsters just out of college. Knock their heads together. Remove the pulpy interiors composed of high falutin' literary ideas. Stuff the cavities with some solid information and the rudiments of grammar and style. Set them aside for a year to cool off, and serve them right.

A USEFUL SUBSTITUTE

When your muse fails to deliver inspiration regularly mix one part of midnight oil with two parts elbow grease, apply continuously for several days and you will be pleased with the result.

A USE FOR VULGARITY

Do not try to remove traces of vulgarity from your work. Go into advertising. A fortune awaits you.

REVIEWS

Many people dislike any tart or acid flavor in reviews. A useful recipe for achieving complete neutrality is to cancel in the second half of your review everything you have said in the first. For example, in reviewing a book for children, declare in the first paragraph that from the adult point of view it is rotten, and in the second that nevertheless children will enjoy it. Scholarly works may be dealt with by devoting most of your space to pointing out a number of trivial errors and adding at the close a brief paragraph beginning, "But these after all are minor blemishes, and it would be ungracious to quibble at a work which, etc."

SEX AND THE SUBCONSCIOUS

We are holding over until next week a number of suggestions on these topics for treatment in a page specially devoted to The Problem of Garbage Disposal.

Charles A. Bennett.

P. S. King & Co. of London announce the immediate publication of "The Geneva Protocol," by Philip J. Baker. Mr. Baker, who has been connected with the disarmament work of the League of Nations since its foundation, is a fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and Cassell Professor of International Relations in the University of London.

The BOWLING GREEN

A Publisher's Reader

WE were speaking of the kind of notes that editors think it necessary to append to schoolbook editions of great poetry. I had chosen a number of hilarious examples from the "Comus" I "studied" at the age of fifteen. They had to be omitted last week for want of space; but I will go back to the subject long enough to quote just one.

In lines 317-18 of "Comus" Milton speaks (very prettily) of the "low-roosted lark" rousing from "her thatched pallet." I spare you the scholastic editor's explanation that "low-roosted lark" means "the lark in her low resting-place," and that "roost, even today, is used figuratively for any temporary resting-place." But on "thatched pallet" he is beyond price. Oyez:—

Thatched, as Masson suggests, may here refer to the texture of the nest itself, and not to the covering. Keightley, however, says: "The ideas here belong rather to a henhouse than to the resting-place of the lark, which has no *thatch* over it, and in which, as it is on the ground, he does not *roost*.

The encyclopædias must be wrong when they say that Duns Scotus died in the fourteenth century. He is immortal. This sort of commentary is on a par with the moving picture director who, in filming "Peter Pan" (and very delightfully) thought it necessary to have Slightly and Toodles and the other Lost Boys refer to each other as *American* gentlemen; and to run up the Stars and Stripes to the maintruck of the pirate ship (with appropriate strains from the orchestra). This suggests a gruesome thought: perhaps in Barrie's M. S. Slightly and Toodles were originally Scottish gentlemen, but the London publisher wouldn't stand for it. Literature is full of such small difficulties of translation. I remember that in the enchanting Mr. A. P. Herbert's "The House by the River" one of the characters was described as so unimportant that his death would be mentioned only on the front page of the newspapers—a statement entirely incomprehensible to American readers not familiar with the position of obits in the London press.

* * *

Imaginative literature fights its way down to us from the past through a thick fog of just such cuttlefish comment as the above on the lark's nest. In this great biological process there is one character who rarely receives his due tribute: the Publisher's Reader. The Publisher's Reader is not only the one who first spots the genius of such things as "Comus"; he also wades grimly through quagmires of twaddle and spares us much of it. The other day, in the course of such exciting adventures as a round among publishers' offices always offers, I came across a charming example of the Reader at his best. I am not permitted to identify the episode; but I copy here, because it is really interesting—and valuable to all young writers—the report written on a MS submitted lately to a New York publisher.

The MS came in with the following letter:—

Dear Sir:—

Will you be so kind as to criticize the following enclosed Poems? They were all written from twelve to eighteen years of age. I shall deem it a favor to me if you will do so.

In a small provincial town like this, very few, or none at all, are interested in Poetry or writing in any form.

I shall appreciate this kindness, and hope to hear from you as soon as possible. Thanking you in advance, I am,

Yours very truly,
FRANCES ————————.

P.S.—I enclose stamped envelope for return. Could you suggest any text-books to study rhyme, meter, versification, etc.? Thanking you for this information.

After reading the MS the Publisher's Reader wrote as follows:

A little collection written from twelve to eighteen years of age. The author asks for criticism and suggestions, and says: "In a small provincial town like this, very few, or none at all, are interested in poetry or writing in any form."

I do not think it is desirable to offer any detailed criticism. The author surely knows now—or will surely have to learn—that any writing worth while is not a matter merely of moods or good intentions, but of travail and constant care. She should be able by now to form some adequate opinion of work that she did years ago. Nobody can help her unless she is willing in a very real sense to help herself; to put away imperfect work resolutely; to read, study, and compare. She is evidently eager to learn; but she does not realize yet that her only real teacher must be herself; that she must develop her own powers of observation and self-criticism. She cannot learn to write poetry by reading text books, though she may gather some useful information from time to time.

Some of the verses in this little collection have a very pleasant atmosphere, but they are immature and unimportant. She must not mind my saying this. False impressions are not helpful; and false praise is a very poor thing. There is no reason for her to be discouraged. But she has to begin at the beginning, and it is idle to let her think she has yet travelled any considerable portion of the poet's path.

Here is a stanza from the first piece:

I saw the dewy roses
That laughed with you
They were but poesies
And could not be true.

This means something to her, because she gets the color and rhythm of the mood in which she wrote it; but if she will examine it with detachment, she will see that it is unreal and meaningless. And she should not write "poesies" when she means "posies." Nor should she send out work which she has not taken the trouble to read herself, and expect people unknown to her to be more interested and more careful than she is herself. This is a point that she should remember; and she must remember too that it is suggested in kindliness, and not carpingly. Here are two examples:

Awake cried the three
Our camels are not tired now
The Christ-Child we long to see
And hiss His noble brow.

You should have corrected that, Frances. And read the next verse again:

Startled they arose
From their beds on the hround
"Go as far as the star goes"
They said as they sheep quieted down.

Take pains with what you know, Frances; try to get the simple things right; and fuller knowledge and understanding will come day by day.

Only one more quotation is necessary:

If from Heaven's graces you fall
Everyone can't be saints, you know
Just with humility call
For pardon here below.
If for some reason you are blind
Just open your eyes wider next time.
If to a neighbor you are unkind
Give him the best that is thine.

This is not poetry, Frances; it is not even good verse. But if you are disappointed, face the disappointment bravely; see what other people are doing; write very little, and be very critical of your own work for some time. Gradually you will see why the verses you have written are not good, and you will determine that the verses you are going to write will be increasingly better.

I don't know of any text-books, Frances, that would be especially helpful to you at present. You see, I really know so little about you that it is difficult to advise you sensibly—and you are a long way away. But I will try to find a book that deals simply and clearly with some of the questions that perplex you; so I have made a note of your name and address. In the meantime, you must not worry because I am sending your little collection of verses back to you. Every author has to accept such an experience; and you would be astonished to know how often well-known people have their work returned.

* * *

I am glad to have had an opportunity to copy this letter. It deserves to be reprinted where aspiring writers can see it. It is no necessary part of a publisher's duty to "criticize" material obviously impossible. A printed rejection slip would have been plenty. But once in a while the anonymous and weary Reader bubbles over like that, for the honor of his profession; to which, as Lord Bacon reminds us, every man is a debtor. Some of the most interesting tidbits of literary criticism lie buried irretrievably in publishers' files. What wouldn't we give for a little volume of George Meredith's reports on MSS in the long years he was a reader for Chapman and Hall?

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

* * *

The first and second volumes of the English translation of Helmholtz's "Handbuch der Physiologischen Optik," prepared under the editorship of Professor Southall of Columbia University and published by the Optical Society of America, is now ready for distribution. In selecting for translation the third (and latest) edition, 1909-10, the editor has in large measure been influenced by the incorporation in that edition of most valuable appendices by v. Kries, Nagel, and Gullstrand. Since, on the other hand, the third edition, based by v. Kries and Nagel on the first, omitted the very important work of König done in direct development of Helmholtz's ideas and incorporated in the second edition, this phase of the subject has been treated in an appendix (which appears in the second volume) by Christine Ladd-Franklin, which will also contain a critical examination of the Helmholtz and Hering theories of color-vision and an exposition of her own theory. The third volume will come out in the Spring.

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Books of Special Interest

Homeric Tradition

HOMER, THE ORIGINS AND THE TRANSMISSION. By THOMAS W. ALLEN. New York: Oxford University Press. 1924. $6.

Reviewed by PAUL SHOREY
University of Chicago

MR. ALLEN says truly that in classical philology, and more particularly as regards Homer, an avalanche of "literature" has long since buried the originals. So he writes another book to augment the avalanche. The quip inevitably suggests itself to one who has reviewed twenty or thirty big books on Homer in the past forty years and now has four or five new ones on his desk. But it is not quite fair to Mr. Allen. For his book is really what it purports to be, a collection and interpretation of the evidence on the matters about which he writes. Such topics as the ancient lives of Homer of which he gives a useful table, the epic cycle which he thinks was still extant in the time of Proclus, the meaning of Argos, Danæ and Achæ, the Homeridæ whom he believes to have been a real family or clan, the alleged recension of Peisistratus, ancient quotations of Homer, the testimony of the papyri he gives a fuller, fairer, and more convenient compilation of the available evidence than can elsewhere be found in English. Mr. Allen's book is indispensable to scholars and libraries. He does not write for the general public which will continue to read that charming historical romance, the "Rise of the Greek Epic," in the enlarged, but unrepentant and uncorrected third edition. Yet perhaps the faith of a few readers will be shaken by the warning that most of the things confidently affirmed by Professor Murray are as confidently and somewhat more critically denied by Mr. Allen.

Mr. Allen has, of course, his own theories. They tend mainly to the rehabilitation of the tradition. He finds that "Homer" (that is the Iliad and the Odyssey) was from 500 to 700 B. C. taken for granted as pre-existent, that he is distinctly presupposed by the so-called Cyclic Epics and, by implication, in Hesiod. There was, then, a Homer who lived say in the ninth century B. C., wrote in a mixed dialect of Æolic and old Ionic and therefore lived where such a dialect is spoken, say at Chios. The composition of Homer by the commission of Peisistratus is therefore a monstrous myth of modern scholarship. The older texts of Homer were interpolated or expanded by the rhapsodes or reciters, thereby giving rise to longer editions. It was not the influence of the Alexandrian critics that discredited these longer texts and established a medium text of the Vulgate, but the decline of the institution of rhapsodizing, or public recitation, and the practice of the publishers, who selected it for their copyists. The inconclusive evidence of the papyri and of casual quotations so far as it justifies any inference supports this hypothesis.

I am not so sure as Mr. Allen is of all these affirmative conclusions. But I cordially concur with all that he says of the absurdity of the modern literature of Homeric pseudo-science and in the belief that one poet living centuries before Peisistratus composed the Iliad and the Odyssey substantially as they have come down to us. This was my opinion when some thirty-five years ago I wrote for the *Dial* a review of Andrew Lang's "Homer and the Epic" on which Lang's comment was that when Chicago does take up the Homeric question she will make it hum. It is hard, as Hazlitt somewhere says, to find oneself right at last. My complete scepticism suppressed all ambition to swell the stream of Homeric literature by anything more than reviews, encyclopædia articles, and brief notes on the blunders which by some fatality dog the higher Homeric criticism. I have also tried to keep the teaching of Homer sane by reducing assigned illustrative readings to little more than Arnold, "On Translating Homer," Jebb's comprehensive little volume, the books of Andrew Lang, Schuckhardt's Schliemann, and Seymour's sober and substantial book on Homeric life which will incidentally give the student as much as he needs to learn and more than he can possibly remember of the futile scholasticisms of the Homeric question. His time will be much better occupied in learning to read Homer intelligently and metrically as he would an English poet which an astonishing proportion of students and teachers abroad as well as here cannot do, and in acquiring some appreciation of Homeric poetic style and of some of the niceties of usage overlooked by the higher critics—as for example, that the particles *dé tote ge* point to a pathetic contrast. The higher critics will say (1) that this is trivial, (2) that it is not true, (3) that they always knew it. But they should look at the passages again. It is only a trifle. But there are plenty more, and their sum is not trifling.

Needle-Work

EMBROIDERY AND PATTERN DESIGN. By HANNAH FOWLER and GEORGE F. CRAGGS. New York: Isaac Pitman. 1924.

Reviewed by FRANCES MORRIS
Metropolitan Museum of Art

AS is stated in the introduction of this small volume on needlework and design, it is a book written "not as a panacea for all needlework-teaching troubles, not as a royal road, nor as a patent process, but to assist those who may be seeking guidance in teaching the subject under the conditions generally found in elementary schools."

While this book has been prepared with a special view to helping teachers working under the English school system, it ought to prove equally valuable to those working in any outlying district where there is no access to libraries and museums. The embroidery teacher of today has indeed a hard row to hoe in competing with the fascinating freedom of outdoor life that is so much more alluring to the modern athletic girl than are the needle and work-basket of the past generations; and this with the machine-made embroidery that is available at little cost, often quite as effective as hand-work, makes the problem of teaching the art of the needle still more difficult.

What seems to be a very generally accepted fact in the curriculum of twentieth century students in the crafts, is the idea that there is no necessity for thoroughness in technique, and that in art-work drudgery should be eliminated at any cost. In embroidery, as this author states—as in every other line of endeavor—exercise in stitchery is as necessary as scales are in music; but today the average student considers himself or herself a finished pupil in design before the rudimentary technique of drawing has been mastered.

The embroidery section of this book written by Hannah Fowler covers ten chapters, illustrated by twenty-five plates. Of these two give the technique of stitchery in outline, and the application of various stitches to line and form. Plates of this type are always helpful to beginners, either with or without a teacher as each movement of the needle is clearly described. Other plates show detached motives worked in different stitches; border patterns and samplers full of suggestions to aspiring students. One of the most effective of these shows a series of well-designed buttons that recall those that trimmed the gorgeous coats and waistcoats of eighteenth century dandies. The plates illustrating the completed articles designed and worked by English students, reflect the conservative attitude of British craftsmanship, both text and plates revealing no inclination to acknowledge an interest in the more or less pseudo-fantastic tendency of modern decorative art.

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Foreign Literature

Sparks from the Hammer

LE FAVILLE DEL MAGLIO. Tomo primo, Il. Venturiero senza Ventura, e Altri Studii. By GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO. Milano: Fratelli Treves. 1924. Lire 25.

Reviewed by THOMAS CALDECOT CHUBB

THOSE of a more restrained temperament who prefer Pirandello notwithstanding, Gabriele d'Annunzio remains probably the most representative Italian now writing. Both his faults—of which the chief is exaggeration—and his virtues—of which the chief is an exuberant eloquence—are those of his country. Therefore, to understand him is to understand pre-war and immediately post-war Italy (or at least the most vocal part of it) just as to understand Rudyard Kipling is to understand a parallel section of England and to understand, say, Maurice Barrès and the but lately deceased Jacques Anatole Thibault is to understand the two diverging attitudes of France. That d'Annunzio, equipped with nothing but his pen and his audacity, should have lifted himself to be Prince of Monte Nevosa seems to me a confirmation of this, as does also the fact that a writer whom even Italians agree is difficult should be brought out in a first edition of ten thousand copies and be quoted on the walls of banks and in popular oratory from Catania to Fiume or Trieste.

And this is not wholly an unfavorable reflection of Italy. If there was ever a writer who saw truth lucidly and fearlessly, it is the d'Annunzio of "Le Novelle della Pescara." Sometimes his pen lingers too lovingly on the details of brutality as in the description of the death of the Duke of Ofena. But it is always in the cause of vividness, and he anticipates the earliest of our own realists by at least two lustra. If there was ever a writer gifted with a superlative and thrilling imagination, it is the d'Annunzio of the first act of "La Città Morte." The superb concept of laying a thoroughly modern tragedy in "thirsty" Argolis within the sound of the picks and shovels which are excavating for the tomb of Agamemnon atones for even more than he is capable of in the way of subsequent verbosity. If there was ever a writer who had found the power of making frames of mind dramatic it is the d'Annunzio of certain passages of "The Fire of Life."

But also if there was ever a writer who was theatrical and egotistical, it is d'Annunzio. Egotistical especially. Nowhere more so than in this book.

Generally when six hundred pages are extracted from "the book of memory" of any writer it is when, being deceased, he can no longer protest against the action of some friend who is too enthusiastic to beat not the bones of the dead. Not so in this book by d'Annunzio. He himself makes the selection. He himself promises two further volumes. And he admits, quoting from the "Fioretti," that "the reason and cause is pride."

In the preface, d'Annunzio tells how he once found the private note book of a Florentine merchant of the time of Dante, a prominent merchant, who was at one time Gonfalonier, and at another time one of the Ten. On the title page was written: In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, I will herafter make memorial of certain special things, for my own understanding (*a chiarezza di me*) and for the understanding of those that follow me." Under this heading from time to time, d'Annunzio has assembled for *his* own understanding such analyses or impressions of his own emotions as could be contained in the loosely organized description of a ride toward San Miniato over Florence, in a vague consideration of attention, in a casual conversation on the patina of bronze.

Well, there is a certain amount of merit in the dozen-odd pieces. "The Gospel According to Satan" (*"Il Vangelo Secondo L'Avversario"*) is a splendid title, though the matter written under it is diffuse and poorish. "La Clarissa d'Oltramare," a story of an American woman who lives in Venice while she makes models of its famous buildings, without attaining anything that would be beyond the abilities of Guido da Verona, is interesting for its honesty and simplicity and for the inevitable recognition of one artist by another that it shows. There is a first-rate realistic painting of a stop at the railway station of Ancona (in "Scrivi che Quivi e Perfecta Laetitia"), an amazing fragment about Lazarus called "Gesu e Il Risuscitato," and, of course, here, there, and everywhere—as for example, "a new moon the color of burning sulphur"—a brilliant d'Annunzian phrase.

But on the whole, how little! The volume contains a total of 653 pages. What I have enumerated makes up perhaps fifty or sixty, perhaps even a hundred of them. The rest is at best raw material, to be reshapen later. At worst, it is inchoate trash.

Take, for example, "Il Vangelo Secondo L'Avversario." There you have five or six thousand words, beginning with the description of the vague mental gropings of an egoist who has been deserted by his mistress. This serves as prelude to three compact mordant sketches. But out of all its loquaciousness what clear impression do you get of either the gropings or of Gabriele d'Annunzio? Isn't what it amounts to the preliminary unsuccessful attempt to delineate a frame of mind like those with which he gemmed so successfully "Il Fuoco"? Not devoid of material, perhaps. Certainly not finished art.

It is a generally accepted theory that after creating a certain amount of matter a writer exhausts himself; that this is the reason why after a pinnacle has been reached there follows a decline in his work. These pieces by d'Annunzio argue against that theory. Most of them bear dates of from fifteen to thirty years ago when his published work was at its highest. It is more likely that if d'Annunzio as any other writer whose high point has apparently been reached were to draw less frequently on his notebooks of the previously discarded he would continue to be able to furnish good work.

THE HUNTING OF THE SNARK
is included with THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS and ALICE IN WONDERLAND, making what is practically the works of
LEWIS CARROLL
in this latest volume, in the
Modern Library
In addition there are the eternally charming Tenniel illustrations and just the right kind of an introduction by Alexander Wollcott. 95c
The Modern Library catalog contains full description of the new Spring 1925 titles in the Modern Library. They are: The Child of Pleasure by Gabriele d'Annunzio, South Wind by Norman Douglas, Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë, and Life of the Caterpillar by John Henri Fabre.

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A Letter from London

By Marie Belloc Lowndes

PERHAPS the two most interesting books published in England during the coming year will concern two men whose lives were as far apart the one from the other as two lives can well be. I refer to the forthcoming collection of letters written by Joseph Conrad and to Sir Sydney Lee's official life of King Edward the Seventh.

To the mind of the present writer no biography of a famous man, however interesting and valuable, and however unexpected may be some new fact or facts that it presents, can compare with the publication of a series of letters written by that same man with no thought of publication. A man's letters, written with his own hand, tell the truth always, or, rather, even when the letters are lying letters, they invariably reveal the writer's character and general outlook on life. We have yet to learn whether Conrad was a good letter writer. I lately read several letters written by him to a lady, no longer young, for whom he had a high regard. They were written in French, and were, to all intents and purposes, those of a Frenchman writing to a Frenchwoman. They are delightful in turn and expression, and instinct with a kind of delicate and shrewd humor, but they reveal curiously little of the writer's personality. I hear from one of his friends, who is in a position to speak with authority, that though he sometimes wrote most interesting letters, they were always disappointingly unegotistical. Now and again, in answer to a direct question on the part of some correspondent whom he liked, he would write of, say, the genesis of one of his books. One such letter, which may or may not be published in the forthcoming collection, dealt in great detail with one of the characters in "The Nigger of the Narcissus," but of himself he always wrote singularly little.

I hear that Sir Sydney Lee intends to make copious use of King Edward's correspondence. Both as Prince of Wales and, later on, as a sovereign burdened with a great daily mass of work, he was a most excellent letter writer; even his shortest notes to those whom he trusted were full of wit and point, and he was ever one of those more human beings who can infuse the spirit of fun into what they write. With the exception of certain formal notes which have appeared here and there in contemporary volumes of recollections, none of the late King of England's letters have been allowed to be published. It is a tribute to the good sense and sincerity of nature of George the Fifth that the delicate, as well as the onerous, task of writing his father's official life has been entrusted to Sir Sydney Lee. It is an open secret that there were passages in Sir Sydney Lee's life of King Edward in the "Dictionary of National Biography" which hurt and annoyed certain members of the royal family. It seemed, in the eyes of at least two of Queen Victoria's surviving children, to show a measure of blame of both the then Prince of Wales' parents with regard to the severity and sunlessness of his early education. The necessarily short biography was, however a model of what such a biography should be, and the late king—unlike so many royal personages—will certainly be proved to have been fortunate in his biographer.

A great many people—though not perhaps as many people as would have been the case even a few years ago—will look forward to reading the early, and rather mysteriously suppressed, novel of Swinburne's entitled "Lesbia Brandon." The manuscript of this book has long been in the possession of the famous bibliophile, Mr. T. J. Wise. Those of the poet's old friends who had the right to have a say in the matter have been till lately unwilling that "Lesbia Brandon" should be published. In the days when Swinburne wrote this story, and for a long time after those days, "Lesbia Brandon" would have been regarded as "daring." That, however, will not be the case now, and I understand that the book will first appear in a limited and numbered edition.

Apropos of books which owe, may we say, part of their charm to their being regarded as "improper," "Serena Blandish, or The Difficulty of Getting Married, by a Lady of Quality," is being a good deal discussed, especially in the high little world which it portrays. Serena Blandish was described in *The Times Literary Supplement* as "a brilliant tract for the times." It recalls to at least one reader certain of those slight witty *contes libertins* at which so many French 18th century writers, from Voltaire downwards, tried their hand with more or less success. It is known to the initiated that the creator of "Serena Blandish" is the author of two notable little volumes inspired by some phase of the war, one of which was a most beautiful and distinguished piece of work—one of the very best, if not the best, imaginative war-books written in English. It is a curious fact that the story in question, "The Lady of Quality's" second war-book, was full of heart; "Serena Blandish" is strangely without any touch of heart or—to use a far more exact if now old-fashioned word—sentiment.

The book to which I, personally, look forward very eagerly will be called "The Canterbury Letters." The manuscript was found among Maurice Hewlett's papers after his death. The "letters" are supposed to have been written by the various characters in "The Canterbury Tales" and dropped on the way during their pilgrimage. It is a delightful and whimsical idea—as delightful and whimsical as was the Hewlett known to his friends. It is a strange thing indeed that at a time when the early books of certain contemporary writers whom it is not unreasonable, or even unkind, to suppose will be as "dead as mutton" within a very few years from now, are fetching in booksellers' catalogues at least double and treble their published price, copies of the first editions of Hewlett's magnificent early novels, "Richard Yea and Nay," and "The Queen's Quair," are not even listed.

It is also good news that Mr. Somerset Maugham, whose fame as a playwright has obscured his claim to be regarded as one of the few great English novelists of our time, should be bringing out a new book. "The Painted Veil" is laid in China, and is quite unlike anything else he has written, but this unlikeness of one book to another has always been a distinguishing characteristic of Mr. Maugham. I remember the deep impression made on me by "Mrs. Craddock," a book which fell practically dead, this being the more curious as "Liza of Lambeth" had made quite a little stir. "In Human Bondage" was at once appreciated by all those who like fine and distinguished work but it was not till "The Moon and Sixpence" appeared that Mr. Maugham reached the wide reading public, and it is strange that the great majority of those who are familiar with him as a playwright seem quite unconscious that he is also a novelist.

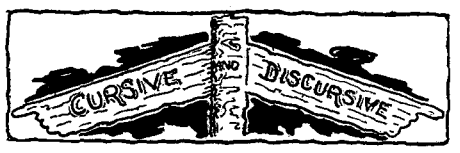
Foreign Notes

MUSIC lovers will find of interest the volume which Alma Maria Mahler has edited and recently published containing a selection of the letters of her eminetn husband. "Gustave Mahler: Briefe (1879-1911)" brings together a correspondence addressed to a large number of persons, some of whom are known to the Anglo-Saxon public, but more of whom are not. They are not of large importance, but they cast much intereesting light on Mahler's compositions and experiences as a musical conductor.

For several years *The Bookman's Journal* of London has published a monthly analysis of the demands in England for first editions of modern British authors, based on the desiderata of second hand booksellers compiled from English trade papers. In the list for the four weeks ending November 22, printed in the December number, the ten leaders are as follows: John Galsworthy, Anthony Trollope, Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, Rudyard Kipling, W. H. Hudson, Sir J. M. Barrie, E. M. Forster, Michael Arlen, and Thomas Hardy. The list contains fifty-four names and it is surprising to find Robert Louis Stevenson and Oscar Wilde at the foot. There are some indications that the demand for the less important authors has passed its peak, but the first editions of Conrad, Kipling, Hudson, and Stevenson will doubtless continue.

A memorial to Gibbon, the historian, at Lausanne, where he spent many years and where he finished his history and memoirs, is under consideration.

The famous London auction house of Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge has changed its name to Sotheby & Company. The management and policy will remain unchanged.



By the Phoenician

THE latest kind of a novel seems to be the cubist novel as exemplified by *Eugene Zamiatin's* "We" translated by *Gregory Zilboorg*. The underlying idea of the book was touched upon by the Capeks in "The World We Live In" and "R. U. R." In "We" is set forth the millenium of standardization, where individuals are simply numbers and all their activities ordered according to a Table of Hours. Their thinking is done for them by a State Journal, their conduct supervised by a Well-Doer. The great United State of which they are all members insists upon their all voting their state within it as 100% happiness. Finally after the crushing of an abortive revolution the malcontents are rounded up to have their Centre of Fancy carefully excised. The style of "We" is odd in the extreme, but the satire is trenchant.

Boni & Liveright declares that limited editions of the "Intimate Letters of *James Gibbons Huneker*," "The Poems of *François Villon*," and *George Moore's* "Anthology of Pure Poetry" were all sold out before publication.

We learn that a unique second-hand bookstore in Springfield, Massachusetts, is *Johnson's* Second-Hand Bookshop. *Joseph Conrad, Rebecca West* and *Robert Frost* have so endorsed it. *Peter Neal*—see *Heywood Broun*—purchased his copy of "Ulysses" there. If you ever want to hunt up Johnson's you will find it at 391 Main Street.

Lewis Galantiere has translated *Jean Cocteau's* novel, "Thomas the Imposter." Thomas is said to be "one of the most appealing characters in French fiction." This to us seems more important news than, for instance, that *Ibanez's* "Alfonso XIII Unmasked" has stirred up a lot of excitement in Spain, even though Ibanez tried to get his book in pamphlet form smuggled across from France into Spain, and the Spanish Government promptly ordered all aircraft passing the border to be shot down.

Hervey Allen informs us of the Blindman Prize of the Poetry Society of South Carolina, previously awarded year by year to *Grace Hazard Conkling, Leonora Speyer*, and *Joseph Auslander. W. Van R. Whitall*, Esq. of Pelham, N. Y., offers this prize of $250 to any citizen of the United States or to any British subject speaking English for the best poem fourteen lines or over (with special consideration to sustained poems of length) who submits a previously unpublished and uncopyrighted poem (one only) accompanied by a sealed envelope containing the name of the author, to The Blindman, care the Poetry Society of South Carolina, No. 57 Broad St., Charleston, S. C. All poems must be typed on one side of the paper only, accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

We wonder at *Mr. Walter Edwin Peck*, who has stated in *The New York Times Book Review* of January 11th that "The Triumph of the Whale" is *Shelley's* lost satire upon the *Prince Regent*. This poem, as everyone knows, is by *Charles Lamb* and Lamb gave it to *Leigh Hunt*. The superior book dealer, Dr. *A. S. W. Rosenbach*, of Manhattan, possesses the original manuscript which Hunt printed either in the *Indicator* or the *Examiner*.

Edgar Saltus is having a revival. Pascal *Covici* announces four of his unpublished works and a biography by Mrs. *Marie Saltus*. "Uplands of Dreams" (stories and essays), "Victor Hugo and Golgotha," "Floraline Schopenhauer," "Purple and Fine Women" (introduced by *W. L. George*, "Poems by Edgar and Marie Saltus," and "Edgar Saltus, The Man," are the titles.

We call especial attention to the public exhibition from Sunday, January 25th on, of the Japanese Print Collection of *Arthur Davison Ficke*, and also this noted American poet's "Jade Dragons," a collection of ancient carved Chinese girdle-clasps, at the Anderson Galleries (*Mitchell Kennerley*, President). An attractive illustrated catalogue of the latter will be mailed by the Galleries on receipt of fifty cents. The Jade Dragons are to be sold by order of Mr. Ficke on Thursday afternoon, January 29, at 2:30, and the Japanese Print Collection is to be sold Thursday and Friday evenings, January 29th and 30th, at 8:15.

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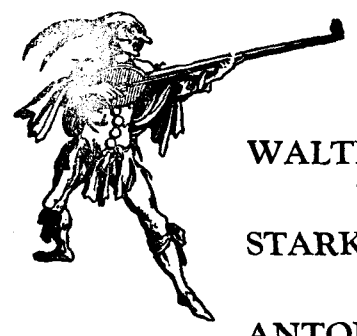

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Announcement

Have you ever wished that you could have been a famous person out of history? Think of the fun you could have had as Voltaire, or perhaps Cleopatra, or the Grand Mademoiselle, or Mirabeau, or Leonardo de Vinci, or Talleyrand. Fancy living in their times, knowing the people they knew, discussing the gossip and scandal that made their idle hours bright and amusing.

They are dead, of course, but they still live in the biographies that have been written of them. The House of Putnam has made biography — excellent biography — one of the strong points on its list over a period of eighty years. The result is a fine assortment.

There is THE LIFE OF VOLTAIRE, one of the most amusing and brilliant stories ever put on paper, by S. J. Tallentyre, who, it may surprise you to learn, is not a man but a woman (her first name is Sarah). This Life is a classic and generally acknowledged to be the best that has been written. The same author has written in THE LIFE OF MIRABEAU the stirring tale of a dynamic man of energy, as different from Voltaire as day is from night.

Then there is LEONARDO DA VINCI: THE FORERUNNER by D. Merejkowski, a famous book which continues to increase its sales steadily since it was published several years ago. If you have not read it, you have missed a remarkable book dealing with a character who stands as the perfect example of the genius . . . a man who was an engineer, a painter, a writer, a sculptor, a politician, a man of overflowing energy and charm and perhaps the greatest figure of the Renaissance.

OLD COURT LIFE IN FRANCE, by Frances Elliot, presents a glowing picture of life in the courts of the French Kings. There is a marvelous process of fascinating characters—Diane de Poiters, Cardinal de Richelieu and Cardinal Mazarin, Marie de Medici, Louise de Lavalliére, de Montespan, de Maintenon, Voltaire, Diderot, Racine, Moliére, de Pompadour, Marie Antoinette, the Princesse Lamballe, Mirabeau—all these and many others out of a history that reads like the most fascinating romance.

In addition to these there are the two new biographies, both best sellers, MARIE ANTOINETTE by Hilaire Belloc, and THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CLEOPATRA by Arthur Weigall, which offer novel points of view on these two famous queens.

If you are weary of fiction turn aside and buy this list of biographies. They will provide such a feast of reading as cannot be excelled.

They can be obtained at any bookstore or from Putnams, on Forty-fifth Street, just *west* of Fifth Avenue.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

A HISTORY OF SCULPTURE. By *George Henry Chase* and *Chandler Rathfon Post*. Harpers.

MASTERS OF ARCHITECTURE. By *W. W. Scott-Moncrieff*. Scribners. $2.50.

Belles Lettres

THE FREEMAN BOOK. *Huebsch*. $3.

ERASMUS. IN PRAISE OF FOLLY. Edited by *Horace Bridges*. Pascal Covici.

A LAST SCRAP BOOK. By *George Saintsbury*. Macmillan. $3.

Biography

MARY STUART. By FLORENCE A. MACCUNN. Dutton. 1924.

This is a life of the much-written Mary of Scotland, told by a woman from a woman's point of view, and well and simply constructed. It contains no new material, new theories, or new interpretations, but is by no means a mere compilation. Readers who wish a competent biography, which does not assume preknowledge of the woman and the period, will find this book acceptable. The style is easy and the characterization excellent.

"WILD BILL" (JAMES BUTLER HICKOK). By *O. W. Coursey*. Mitchell, S. D.: Educator Supply Co.

SELECTIONS FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ELIZABETH SMITH. Edited by *Mary Alice Wyman*. Lewiston, Me: Lewiston Journal Co.

ANNEKE JANS BOGARDUS AND HER NEW AMSTERDAM ESTATE. Compiled by *Thomas Bentley Wikoff*, Indianapolis, Ind.

TWICE THIRTY. By *Edward W. Bok*. Scribners. $4.50.

SOME VICTORIAN MESS. By *Harry Furniss*. Dodd, Mead. $4.

LETTERS OF JAMES BOSWELL. Collected and edited by *Chauncey Brewster Tinker*. Oxford. 2 vols. $12.

NOON. By *Kathleen Norris*. Doubleday, Page. $1.50.

ROUND THE WORLD. By *Frank Hedges Butler*. Stokes.

FOUR WAY LODGE. By *Charles B. Reed*. Pascal Covici.

"THEREFORE": AN IMPRESSION OF SORABJI KHARSEDJI LANGRANA AND HIS WIFE FRANSCINA. Oxford. $2.50.

Drama

THE FIREBRAND. By *Edwin Justus Mayer*. Boni & Liveright. $2.

THE GUARDSMAN. By *Franz Molnar*. Boni & Liveright. $2.

WEBER & FIELDS. By *Felix Isman*. Boni & Liveright. $3.50.

THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF GERHART HAUPTMANN. Translated by *Willa and Edwin Muir*. Vol. VIII. Huebsch.

THERE CAME TWO WOMEN. By *Herbert Quick*. Bobbs-Merrill.

THE CHARLESTON STAGE IN THE XVIII CENTURY. By *Eola Willis*. Columbia, S. C.: The State Co. $5.

LUCIFER. By *George Santayana*. Cambridge, Mass.: Dunster House.

OLD ENGLISH. By *John Galsworthy*. Scribners. $1.

Economics

THE ECONOMIC LAWS OF ART PRODUCTION. By *Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith*. Oxford University Press. $2.

LABOR POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES STEEL CORPORATION. By *Charles A. Gulick*. Longmans, Green.

Education

THE DECROLY CLASS. By *Amélie Hamaïde*. Dutton. $2.

THE TEACHING OF HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS. By *William A. Millis and Harriet H. Millis*. Century. $2.25.

PERSONNEL PROBLEMS OF THE TEACHING STAFF. By *Ervin Eugene Lewis*. Century. $2.25.

VOLTAIRE'S "MÉROPE." Edited by *Thomas Edward Oliver*. Century. $1.10.

THE YALE COURSE OF HOME STUDY. By *Ralph H. Gabriel* and *Arthur B. Darling*. Yale University Press.

THE ENGLISH SPEAKING NATIONS. By *G. W. Norris* and *L. S. Wood*. Oxford. $1.20.

Fiction

THE PROWLER. By HUGH WILEY. Knopf. 1924. $2.

About eight years ago, at a guess, when Mr. Bruce Barton was the editor of *Every Week*, we recall our happy introduction to the negro stories by Octavus Roy Cohen, then appearing in that magazine since lost to print. Subsequently we found them in the wide and blossoming pages of the *Saturday Evening Post*, interdigitated almost with the stories of his contemporary and immediate rival in the ebony field, the lady luck man, Hugh Wiley. Mr. Cohen and Mr. Wiley are both exceedingly clever, but of the two we prefer the cleverness of the latter as the more naïve and the more uniformly sustained. It is something of an accomplishment to tie together the random, even isolated, adventures of a trio (one-third of which is omnivorous goat) when, after all, plot is secondary to incident, and the mechanics of any moment form but the pegs on which to hang brilliant threads of negro dialect and idiom. It is remarkable to be annually amusing with a single subject.

O. Henry's collection, "The Gentle Grafter," musters at least three salient elements: plot, humor, and the surprise ending. That is only a volume. W. W. Jacobs builds upon a similar foundation, but never writes two contiguous tales of the shrewd and evasive Bob Pretty. Mr. Cohen, combining conventional methods with the power of rich, native speech, is more in their wake. His characters are gregarious, his plots thicken. Mr. Wiley is more independent. He leads his wandering Ossians, the amazing Wildcat Vidus Marsden, the tractable Demmy, the four-footed Lily, through illimitable small episodes that here, with the appearance of "The Prowler," come to several volumes. They are company enough, those three. The conversation (of two of them) forgives triviality and impossibility alike. There is life. There is laughter. There is the exhibition of a genius at nothing more than idiomatic repartee, succeeding to such an extent that his own third person intrusions are depressions on the chart of humor.

Footloose, the Wildcat, and his faithful attachés "boon their stummicks" with an assorted harvest from the moist and arid lands of California—oranges of Hollywood, lemons of the bootlegger, figs of pure graft. "The Prowler," like its predecessors, is cyclic; a record of human emotions, a diary of appetites, a witness to attainment and despair. Money! "I sees de ol' cap'n wid six lootenants. Six-ace! Hot dam!" Luxury: "Got to leave heah mighty sudden befo' us gets bogged down neck-deep in de money mud. . . ." Poverty (alas!): "Wisht us could come up wid some cornfield or mebbe a misguided pullet whut has seen 'nuff of life." Lady Luck is around the corner; the romance of the quest is high.

When Ol' Man Trouble ketches up
To where I used to stand,
He finds my footprints leadin' to
De elsewhere Promised Land.

THE LATE UNPLEASANTNESS. By NORVAL RICHARDSON. Small, Maynard. 1924. $2.

Mr. Richardson tries valiantly to inject something worthy of being called a study in his treatment of hang-over Civil War prejudices and memories and their present influences. The spirit is willing, but the mind and method are weak. He achieves nothing more than a portrait of stage Southerners, pitiful and inadequate puppets. In contrast to that there is the simple and—for his readers—effective means of sustaining interest in his yarn. For the plot of this novel is built on the absorbing problem: Will they marry?

The they in question are a young dilettante artist, born in America but brought up in France, and a Southern belle, poor but persevering and patrician. To achieve marriage and happiness they must overcome, first, the hero's desire to leave Cottonville, Mississippi, to which he is bound by the will of a rich but eccentric relative, and hie back to the life of freedom, æsthetics, and French menus in Paris, and, second, the heroine's promise, given when she was fifteen years of age, to marry the seventy-year old Colonel Morancey. Here enter the comic and melodramatic elements necessary to bolster up the tale. Ghosts and crazed Civil War veterans, jealous parvenues, naïve negroes

(*Continued on next page*)

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Her theory is that for centuries alongside of the forces working for progress in the social and moral order of civilization there have been at work definite subversive movements. The evidence presented cannot lightly be dismissed. $7.00

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Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

and irate dowagers tumble out of the novelist's magic sleeve.

The novel is written in the intensely personal form of a diary; nevertheless, Mr. Richardson is unable to penetrate beyond triviality to any sort of intimacy with the hero. All we know of the artist is that he admires "Madame Butterfly"; all we see of his twenty years' residence in France is that he is acquainted with a Ritz-Carlton menu; all we learn of the man is that he uses a surprising amount of colloquial and sloppy English.

WINDOWS FACING WEST. By VIRGINIA MACFADYEN. A. & C. Boni. 1924.

Miss MacFadyen has, in the first quarter of her novel concerning Gretchen May, created a definite and real American character against a real and definite American background. Enter Mr. Grimble, Movie Producer, to whom Gretchen gives herself—for a picture contract—and then drops the contract. Mr. Grimble's corpulence being, in the words of the author, of such "gelatinous quality," we cannot quite believe in Gretchen's "fall." Gretchen looked upon him as "monstrous" and "loathsome," yet her surrender was easy and accommodating. There are Mr. Grimbles in the Moving Picture profession just as there are some similar swine in the theatrical profession, but Gretchen has been drawn for us as a girl of too much spunk, independence, and native wit to leave us quite convinced that she would have been unable to preserve herself from one so naturally repugnant to her. The author has not managed her elucidation of Gretchen subtly enough to make us swallow this episode. But then Du Val Archer follows Mr. Grimble and Du Val Archer is right out of the "Movies," although intentionally of quite another sort. We have seen people like Du Val on the screen, we have never run across him in real life. He is the most unconvincing of the men in the book. Harry Baldwin, whose mistress Gretchen finally becomes, is real enough, with a silver screen patina; Roger Cameron, at the last, is quite natural. In the last quarter the novel rises again to reality, to recognizable life, after what seems to us too histrionic a middle half. The ending is melodramatic. Near the end, in Gretchen's dream, not without its impressiveness, Miss MacFadyen speaks of the symbolical woman of the dream as having "on her forehead . . . a chaplet of orioles." Does she mean an aureole? The phrase startled us.

The writing of this novel seems to possess no particular distinction. Its development disappointed us after a graphic beginning—not because of the circumstances that conditioned Gretchen's life, but because of the unreality of certain characters and episodes. It seems like life read of, or seen upon screen or stage, rather than life actually observed. The sensational and melodramatic too strongly pervade certain pages. We refer such stories back to David Graham Phillips's "Susan Lennox" which, though crude and melodramatic enough at times, had reality in its fibre and a hint of Greek tragedy. "Windows Facing West" does not, we believe, measure up to such a standard.

SEVEN SPLENDID SINNERS: By W. R. H. TROWBRIDGE. Brentano's. 1924.

Here is an importation of a volume which Mr. Trowbridge originally completed in 1908. He postulates that individuals are more important than events in history and presents the unusual histories of a number of eighteenth century ladies, including the nineteenth century Lola Montez with considerable color and appreciation of elegant scandal. He is also interested in exploding slanders and his seven historiettes endeavor to present a perfectly truthful picture. Here are fascinators of a vanished age, "in the habit as they lived." It is distinctly diverting, for instance, to follow the remarkable adventures of Elizabeth Clindleigh or the noted Countess de Lamotte, of the "Necklace"!

WE. By *Eugene Zamiatin*. Dutton. $2.

THE NINTH OF NOVEMBER. By *Bernhard Kellermann*. McBride. $2.50 net.

THE BITTER COUNTRY. By *Anita Pettibone*. Doubleday, Page. $2 net.

THE ROGUE OR THE LIFE OF GUZMAN DE ALFARACHE. By *Matheo Aleman*. Translated from the Spanish by *James Mabbe*. Knopf. 4 vols.

THE RED-MASS. By *Valentine Williams*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

THE TREASURIES OF TYPHON. By *Eden Phillpotts*. Macmillan.

History

THE SOUTHERN PLANTATION. By F. B. GAINES. Columbia University Press. 1925. $2.75.

This is an illuminating and instructive study. Dr. Gaines has set down, after careful research, the conceptions of plantation life and plantation romance as they appear in American literature, drama, and song. Then, with equal care, and a good deal of new detail, he has presented, in contrast, the actual southern plantation, economically, socially, and racially considered. The general result is what any reader historically minded should expect; the vast majority of the plantations had little or no relation to romance, and the chivalric and feudal ideals which have been associated with the term "plantation" had no place there. In the residue—in Eastern Virginia, near Charleston, and sporadically elsewhere—there was some basis for the popular conception.

The value of this study, however, is not in its general, but in its particular conclusions. There is evidence here, for the first time put in convenient form, which is as valuable for literary criticism as for history. The curious fashion in which the relationship of blacks and whites has been given an overemphasis on devotion and an obscuration in the tragic results of sex mixture, is almost a classic instance of the selective power of the romantic mind. An equally instructive example is the contrast between the social brilliance of the tradition and the actual provincialism of the plantation, a contrast all the more interesting because the author freely admits the actuality of much that reality as well as literature supports. And no less interesting is the effect, here clearly depicted, of romantic literary ideas upon character types, like the "Kentucky Colonel," that conform to an ideal made for them by outsiders.

Dr. Gaines's book is over documented, but that is excusable, if not necessary, in a pioneer work. It is the kind of literary history which will supply a new basis for a criticism of American literature. Into criticism, and the use of his own evidence, he should have gone further, and when our scholarship escapes from the shadow of the Ph.D. thesis such a monograph as this will stay unpublished until the author has ripened his study, dropped inessentials, and made a final book out of what is now too often left as an assemblage of evidence. However, this particular monograph accomplishes satisfactorily its modest but useful purpose, and will be a mine of facts for later students of the life and literature of the American South.

SOCIAL LIFE IN STUART ENGLAND. By MARY COATE. Appleton. 1924. $2.

In this little volume of essays Miss Coate has pictured the England of the seventeenth century in its various social aspects. Her subjects range from the land to sickness, from beggars and beadles to newspapers; and include the squire and the parson, women and children, courts and universities, soldiers and seamen, merchants, roads and inns, together with a chapter on letters and letter-writers. Drawn from a great variety of sources, illustrated not only with pictures but with an infinity of quotations, Miss Coate's pages provide an excellent picture of the period which she describes. The book is further enriched with an excellent bibliography. Whether for the reader interested in this period, or for the student "getting up" material on the subject, this volume is equally interesting and valuable.

THE GREEK VIEW OF LIFE. By *G. Lowes Dickinson*. Doubleday, Page. $1.50 net.

A HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. By *Charles Edward Mallett*. Longmans, Green. 2 vols. $15 net.

SALLUST: THE CONSPIRACY OF CATILINE AND THE WAR OF JUGURTHA. Translated into English by *Thomas Heywood* (Tudor Translations). Knopf.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF WHITE HOUSE GOSSIP. By *Edna M. Colman*. Doubleday, Page. $5 net.

International

THE OCCIDENT AND THE ORIENT. By *Sir Valentine Chirol*. University of Chicago. $2.

WESTERN CIVILIZATION AND THE FAR EAST. By *Stephen King-Hall*. Scribners. $5.

ALFONSO XIII UNMASKED. By *Vincente Blasco Ibanez*. Dutton. $1.

(*Continued on page* 486).

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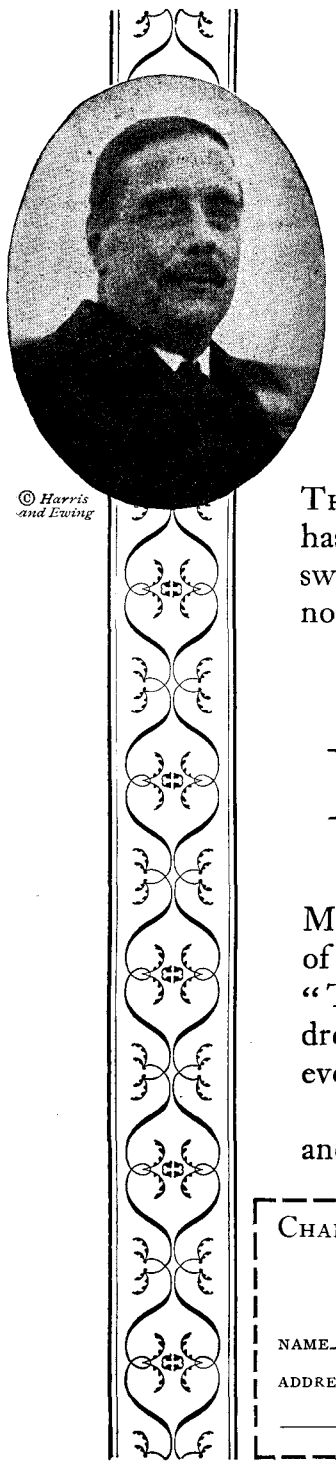
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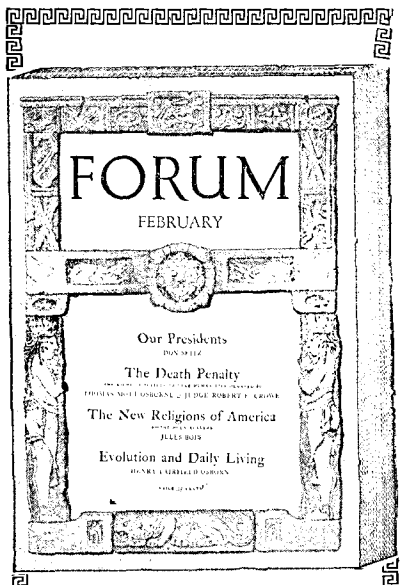

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A BALANCED RATION FOR WEEK-END READING

ANNETTE AND SYLVIE. By ROMAIN ROLLAND. (Holt.)

TWO MUCH MONEY. By ISRAEL ZANGWILL. (Macmillan.)

WITH LAWRENCE IN ARABIA. By LOWELL THOMAS. (Century.)

THE Public Library of Toronto, "glad to see our library discovered by so amiable an explorer," sends me a set of "Catalogues of Canadians": when the one for 1924, on which they are now working, is ready, they will comprise a list of Canadian books in print. As Canadian books "go West" with alarming suddenness, they suggest several substitutes for books on my list that may be hard to get. Instead of the "Times Book of Canada," which I own and advised, "Canada To-day," 1924 edition, 2/6 (Canada Newspaper Co., 25 Cockspur St., London), and for a statistical year-book, "Heaton's Annual," published in Toronto. They strongly recommend "Social and Economic Conditions in the Dominion of Canada," papers by experts that give an outline of current problems and conditions (American Academy of Political and Social Science) and Anderson's "Education of the New Canadian" (Dent), showing work done in the Western provinces for foreigners, especially Slavs and Scandinavians. Nelson's "The Canadian Provinces, Their Problems and Policies" (Musson, Toronto), just published, is called by Arthur Meighan, former Premier, "the most complete picture of Canada and present-day Canadian problems that has yet appeared in print." An oversight in copying made me leave out a book I have read and earnestly recommend, "Women of Red River," original narratives of survivors of the pioneer period, gathered and printed by the Women's Canadian Club of Winnipeg; Mabel Dunham's "Trail of the Conastoga" (Macmillan), gives in fiction form, an account of the Mennonite trek from Pennsylvania to the Niagara peninsula. Two of this year's novels, Bridle's "Hansen" (Macmillan) and Beckles-Willson's "Redemption" (Putnam) derive their chief interest from the discussion of Canadian public affairs that runs through them. But my favorite Canadian novel and one of my best-beloved novels from any country, remains "Our Little Life," by J. G. Sime (Stokes), a book that has the very essence of Montreal, a deep insight into Canada, and a knowledge of the human heart even deeper. Oh yes, there is another book recently from this part of the world that no one who loves beauty in literature should miss, Majory MacMurchy's "The Child's House" (Macmillan). It is stories of child-life distinguished and distinctive among such stories.

N. W., Montclair, N. J., asks for a list of one-act plays in French that could be suitably given by American high school students.

MY own list is beginning to wear thin: realizing that I was tending to advise the same plays over and over, I asked Barrett H. Clark to take the responsibility; his right to do so is attested not only by a shelf of his books on the drama but by his editorship of the series "The World's Best Plays," forty or more published by French in pamphlet form, and to be borne in mind by all these drama committees whose questions are just now crowding my mail. Reminding me that young folks' plays in French are apt to be pure in the sense of stupid, he says that those on this list are at least charming if not very great.

Je m'en vais! Tristain Bernard, 2 characters. Domestic squabble, farce. Rosalie. Max Maurey. 3c. Domestic farce. Un beau soir. M. Vaucaire. Verse; laid in classic Italy. Fleurs d'avril. Vicaire and Truffier. 6c. Verse: fantasy. Les Comédiens errants. Arene and Vernier. Verse: comedy. 7c. Le Bois. A. Glatigny. 2c. Poetic fantasy. Zubiri. Porto-Riche. 4c. Prose fantasy after Victor Hugo. L'école des belles-méres. Brieux. 6c. Satirical comedy. Il était une bergére. A Rivoire. 4c. Verse: romantic comedy. Modestie. Paul Hervieu. Satirical comedy. 3c. Conte de Noël. M. Bouchor. 4c. Romantic 15th century "miracle." Mon Tailleur. A Capus. 4c. Satirical comedy.

Mr. Clark's new "Study of the Modern Drama," to appear this month (Appleton), includes some 200 pages of lists, and has chapters on 61 dramatists. Other questions from drama clubs will appear later; but a good piece of general advice to them is to get "The Living Drama," by Nellie Burget Miller (Century) a study-manual prepared especially with their needs in mind, by one whose wide practical experience as a national officer of the Federation has shown her just what these needs are.

E. J. M., San Francisco, Cal., wishes a list of ten or twelve of the more prominent English short story writers of the present day interested in the treatment of the supernatural, "or of what seems to be the supernatural even though it turns out to have a natural cause."

THE best way to do this would be to get a copy of "23 Stories by Twenty and Three Authors" (Appleton), the recently published successor to the remarkable collection known as "51 Stories" (Appleton). Like that, this collection is with few exceptions by British writers, but the tales are all with an intention like the Fat Boy's in "Pickwick"—they manage, by a variety of expedients, to make your flesh creep. It is not difficult to find stories of this kind in contemporary British fiction; the tendency was marked in the collection of "Georgian Stories" published by Putnam the year before. "23 Stories" has examples of the methods of writers as diverse as De la Mare, Yeats, and W. W. Jacobs. I chose these names from the list because they are among the titles of chapters of one of the most altogether admirable volumes of contemporary criticism, J. B. Priestley's "Figures in Modern Literature" (Dodd, Mead), which comes, by the way, in so desirable a binding that I was lately told by a man with an eye to color-effects that I should advise ladies to wear it under the left arm with dark-blue tailored suits. Mr. Priestley's judgments are discriminating without losing the power of enthusiasm, and his quotations are made with little short of genius; if you have not read the author they will make you read him and if you have you will rush to read him again. At last W. W. Jacobs gets his critical day in court, and men as compara-

(*Continued on next page*)

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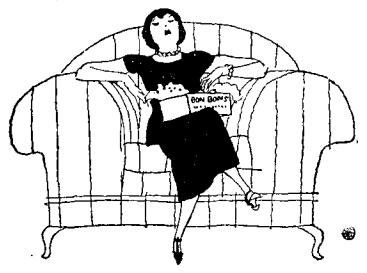

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Points of View

Author and Public

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

SIR:

You are quite right in the personal letter which you have sent to me in analyzing my recent criticism of Irving Babbitt's "Democracy and Leadership," published in part in *The Saturday Review,* as generally hostile to Mr. Babbitt's dogmatic spirit, but as favorable to his thought. The paragraphs for the omission of which you apologize were a succinct summary of his ideas in **"Democracy and Leadership"** so presented as to challenge attention from readers ignorant of him or hostile to him. They were intended to suggest the paradoxical truth that in an age when most creative minds and their intelligent disciples are in one way or another practicing Remy de Gourmont's art of "dissociating ideas" the greatest solvent of contemporary prejudices, sentimentalities, phobias and *pseudodoxia epidemica* of all kinds has been written by the most inveterate dogmatist in America.

It is amusing to find my old acquaintance, Mr. Teusch, in your columns formally reading me out of the communion of Plato's golden men among whom he does me the unspeakable honor of saying that I once belonged, as he himself, he casually acknowledges, still does. It is amusing also to find him making me a follower of Walt Whitman's little Americanism because in my review I built up a comparison which may be abbreviated mathematically thus: As Candide was to France so is "Democracy and Leadership" likely to be to the United States. Mr. Babbitt's book founds its argument upon an acquaintance with European literature which only a very few hundred persons in America possess. Its author is almost the sole representative in this country of the conservative criticism of literature and life of which M. Seillière is perhaps the acknowledged chief in France and of which Maurice Barrès was a great auxiliary. Of course, until criticism of that kind has had a vigorous growth in America we shall remain adolescent in our æsthetic experience as a nation. In saying that America is not prepared to understand Mr. Babbitt or to give hospitality to such a debate as the multiplication of men of his faith would produce I was not paying our provincial nation a compliment. I was regretfully and a little ironically pointing out the wide gulf between Mr. Babbitt and his audience. The irony was double-edged. I wish that it were possible to make the American people as sensitive to the edge turned toward them as Mr. Babbitt's champion has shown himself towards the opposite blade.

MERRITT Y. HUGHES.

Berkeley, California.

Mr. Steuart Protests

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

SIR:

Through the courtesy of my friends Messrs. Little, Brown & Company I have received part of *The Saturday Review of Literature* for December 6, in which generous space is devoted to my Life of Robert Louis Stevenson. To have both an editorial and a review is an honor I appreciate. The editorial is animated by that spirit of enlightened fairness which we expect from a great organ of public opinion in the United States. Will you, however, permit me to call attention to one rather important inaccuracy? Quite inadvertently, I am sure, you class me with the detractors of Stevenson. That is an error. I am not a detractor; on the contrary, I am an ardent admirer, as any attentive reader of my book will discern and as the leading critics on both sides of the Atlantic have noted.

The so-called review by Mr. Frank Swinnerton is set to a different tune. I do not for a moment presume to criticize editorial procedure, though I may be surprised that with such wealth of native-born literary talent in the United States it should have been thought worth while to import a farago of prejudices, misrepresentations, and ineptitudes from Britain. Though purporting to be a review Mr. Swinnerton's article is in reality a soured, splenetic outpouring of personal rancor. He avers in the high *ex cathedra* manner that I do not know Stevenson literature. Is the assertion, I wonder, due to the fact that I own no indebtedness to a certain book by Mr. F. Swinnerton? The book in question is doubtless not so well known as its author might or would desire; but I have seen it. I have even made a valiant attempt to read it. If I was discouraged before reaching the bitter end it was for reasons which may be obvious and need not be stated.

Many people have written of Stevenson and his works; but scarcely any of them with less insight, less appreciation, or real understanding than Mr. Swinnerton. Nor does he seem to be at all better qualified to judge anything written on Stevenson by others. His critical judgments may indeed be dismissed as verging perilously on the worthless.

As to his little homily on egotism, my egotism,—an edifying moral effort which I hope your readers have taken to heart,—I freely admit he appears to be well qualified to speak on the subject with all the authority of one who is himself especially endowed. I dip my flag to him.

But that is by the way. Where a whole article is vitiated by something scarcely distinguishable from spleen and spite it might seem useless to pick out particular instances of misrepresentation. But to illustrate my critic's knowledge and competency I select three examples:

(1) Mr. Swinnerton states that the story of the Stevenson-Henley quarrel is told in full by a previous biographer. That statement is untrue.

(2) He states or implies that my opinions are borrowed—possibly from himself. That also is untrue.

(3) He writes: "The names of Sir Sidney Colvin, Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Lloyd Osbourne are not among those who have helped Mr. Steuart." The most important part of that statement is likewise untrue. In my book I explicitly acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, whom I found most courteous and helpful throughout.

Instances of misstatements and misrepresentations might be multiplied, but I must not take up your space in exposing them. They are equally untrue.

One final point I may mention. Possibly with a smarting sense of his own neglected claims, Mr. Swinnerton says: "Mr. Steuart writes like a man who is intent on the thought that his book will be incomparably the best book on the subject." Seeing that Mr. Swinnerton was in the field the thought was indeed a daring one. But (my egotism blushes over the avowal) the consensus of the best critical opinion alike in America and England finds the thought justified by the performance.

Yours truly,

JOHN A. STEUART.

Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Reader's Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

tively little written about as Robert Lynd, George Saintsbury and J. S. Squire. Altogether I have lately proved it to be as good as a small library for a long train or steamer journey.

H. M. D., Hillsdale, Mich., asks for a book or books on Spanish music, either of the last fifty years or folk-lore music.

CARL VAN VECHTEN'S "The Music of Spain" (Knopf), that was for some time the only book on this subject in English, is now out of print, but meantime it has been treated at some length in the later chapters of J. B. Trend's "Picture of Modern Spain" (Houghton Mifflin), historically, regionally and with reference to types of dance and song. As this inquirer reads Spanish also he can make use of the comprehensive "bibliographical guide to secular Spanish music" which takes up several pages of this book—one which I recommend also to M. P. H., New York, as an addition to a list of books for an intending traveler.

G. M., Elyria, O., asks what novels are included in Galsworthy's "The Forsyte Saga" (Scribner).

HERE it rests," says Mr. Galsworthy in the preface, "preserved in its own juice: "The Sense of Property" as set forth in five books: "The Man of Property," "In Chancery," and "To Let," with two "interludes," the novelettes "Indian Summer of a Forsyte" and "Awakening." To these may now be added "The White Monkey" (Scribner, 1924), which goes on with the career of that unnecessary young woman Fleur and introduces the most lifelike Pekinese in literature.

If correspondents knew the pressure on this department and how few letters in proportion to those received can be answered in print, they would always put at least mailing addresses on questions. A stamped envelope beats that.

The New Books

(*Continued from page* 484)

Juvenile

MEMOIRS OF A DONKEY. By COUNTESS DE SÉGUR. Translated from the French by MARGUERITE FELLOWS MELCHER. Macmillan. 1924. $1.00.

This little book is worth a dozen of the more pretentious volumes for children. It has long been a favorite in France and is now added to those gaily bound small volumes in the Macmillan Little Library Series that are proving veritable gold nuggets for the four to eight year olds. A tale to please both boys and girls is this engaging story of the gifted and sagacious Cadichon who decided to write his memoirs to disprove the familiar fallacy: "Stupid as a donkey." How this diminutive French donkey was naughty in his youth; how he repented and was brought back to the friendship of his comrades and masters; how he nearly perished saving his little mistress from a fire; and how he showed that he could perform better than the circus donkey,—all these adventures and more are recounted with great charm and spirit, and always for the delight of the telling, not because the author thought they ought to make good reading for children. Like Hans Andersen and the Brothers Grimm, the Countess De Ségur seems able to endow the smallest happening, such as the nibbling of a thistle, or a ride through a country lane, with an almost uncanny significance. Like them, too, she is not afraid to introduce a little sadness into the story, which fortunately does not lapse into sentimentality. The translator and illustrator have caught this same spirit and the result is one of the most enchanting and pictorially gay books we have met in many a day.

THE BLOSSOMING OF PATRICIA-THE-LESS. By LIDA LARRIMORE. Penn. 1924. $2.00.

Here is another story of one of those "quaint" little girls who are "not like other children." Patricia, the youthful heroine comes to live with a strong-minded spinster Aunt for whom she has been named, and who represses her and makes her wear queer clothes. But, to my way of thinking she suffers far more at the hands of the author who has put her into the made-over clothes of such literary older sisters as Pollyanna, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, and Anne of Green Gables. In this particular case they seem a bit threadbare. But perhaps girls of from eight to ten, for whom the story is evidently intended, will not mind, especially as the book is attractively made and illustrated with many pictures, some of them in color.

BOYS' GAMES AMONG THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS. By *Edith Stow.* Dutton. $1.50.

ELF KING'S FLOWERS. By *Aunt Sadie* (*Sarah Phelps Stokes Halkett*). Dutton. $2.

OLD ENGLISH TALES RETOLD. By *Harriot Buxton Barbour.* Macmillan.

Poetry

SHIP'S LOG. By GRACE HAZARD CONKLING. Knopf. 1924. $2.

This volume cannot but prove a disappointment to one who has followed Mrs. Conkling's previous work with appreciative pleasure. The author's lyric gift seems somehow to have deserted her; her power to treat beautiful themes appealingly appears almost to have vanished; she has allowed herself to fall victim to a distressing carelessness of workmanship, and has permitted a *penchant* for the newer poetic forms and diction to overwhelm a talent as obviously in need of rhythmic restraint as is that of Sara Teasdale or of A. E. Housman. Such a piece as the following, for example, strikes one as singularly forced and artificial from one who could write a poem so memorable as "I Have an Understanding with the Hills":

MONOTONOUS

Not while you labor from gilt noon of a November day
Till ten o'clock of a brittle November night
To carve my love like a piece of ivory
Into a shape less difficult for you to recognize.

It is to be regretted that the author has not put her work into a shape "less difficult to recognize" as poetry. The "brittle" night represents but the striking form of imagery that is strikingly inappropriate; and similar breaches of artistic taste occur throughout the book. Only in two or three poems, indeed, does the author remind us what she is like at her best; and only in the piece of blank verse entitled "Maine Woods in Winter" does she seem to be writing in response to that urgent and compelling impulse which is the *sine qua non* of the best poetry.

CAPE COD IN POETRY. Edited by JOSHUA FREEMAN CROWELL and FLORENCE HATHAWAY CROWELL. Four Seas. 1924. $2.

It would be difficult if not impossible to compile an anthology of excellent poems typical either of a narrowly limited geographical region or of the authors native to that region. That the limited range and artificial confines of such an anthology would endanger its literary quality is amply demonstrated by the present collection of Cape Cod poems. While undoubtedly this book will prove of interest to any lover of New England; yet it will make small appeal on the grounds of its poetic merit, for the majority of the poems it contains are of the very essence of mediocrity. Some notable writers are included, it is true—Edna St. Vincent Millay, Conrad Aiken, Katherine Lee Bates, Harry Kemp, and others as well known; but even the selections from these poets fall many degrees short of excellence.

THE POETS OF THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY. (Broadway Translations). By F. A. WRIGHT. Dutton. 1924. $3.

This companion to Mr. Wright's earlier volume of translations from the anthology, "The Girdle of Aphrodite," contains a dozen biographical and critical studies interlarded with new renderings of epigrams not included in "The Girdle." Such a book has been much needed, for nothing of the sort has existed in English in spite of the subject's peculiar fascinations. Mr. Wright gives us glimpses of Greek literary life for nearly a thousand years, from the Alexandria of the Ptolemies to the Byzantium of the lovely Theodora, the circus mime and empress in whose reign Sancta Sophia was built. These minor lyrists are true kin of Horace and Herrick, but closer to the latter—exquisite and homely, celebrating love and wine and country life. In their verses, the traveler stops to drink at the well in the orchard, the fishermen eat their barley cakes by the seashore, and the swallows twitter again at the coming of spring. Mr. Wright has written of them with much quiet charm, and the format of his book is worthy of the contents. It is a treat for the literary gourmet.

SONG OF THE BROAD-AXE. By WALT WHITMAN, with Illustrations Cut on Wood by WHARTON H. ESHERICK. Philadelphia: The Centaur Press. 1924. $7.50.

This is the first book issued by the Centaur Press, an admirable example of typography, with a format excellently adapted to Whitman's poem. Mr. Esherick's woodcuts are powerful, with a rhythmic sweep that comports with Whitman's lines. This very satisfactory edition is limited to four hundred copies.

SLANTS. By CLIFFORD GESSLER. Honolulu: Star-Bulletin. 1924.

An attractive cover and attractive illustrations in tint make this book of verses pleasant to the eye, and the atmosphere of some of the poems is exotically attractive. But the verse is mainly ephemeral. The poet seems to succeed best in "free" forms. He has contributed to *Poetry, Contemporary Verse, The Midland,* etc.

THE IRON STRING. By *Albert W. Draves.* Dorrance.

"TURN UP THE CORNERS OF YOUR MOUTH AND SMILE." By *Mattie Lois Fest.*

SONG OF THE BROAD-AXE. By *Walt Whitman.* Philadelphia: Centaur Press.

SONGS AND VERSES. By *Whyte Melville.* Scribner's. $5.

POEMS FOR THE NEW AGE. By *Simon Felshin.* Seltzer.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF VERSE. Edited by *Newman I. White, and Walter C. Jackson.* Durham, N. C.: Trinity College Press.

DREAM TAPESTRIES. By *Louise Morey Bowman.* Macmillan.

THE LETTERS OF GLAUCON AND SARAI NORTHAMPTON. Mass.: Norman Fitts. $1.50.

WINDS AND TIDES. By *Juliet Calhoun Isham.* Putnams.

THE RETROSPECT OF FRANCOIS VILLON. By *George Heyer.* Oxford. $1.50.

ASHES OF ROSES. By *Marjorie Barstow Greenbie.* New York: Rider Press.

SONNETS. By *M. C. S.* Pasadena Calif.: Upton Sinclair.

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The World of Rare Books

By Frederick M. Hopkins

FINAL SALE OF CHEW LIBRARY

PART II of the library of the late Beverly Chew, consisting of English Literature after 1800 and including first editions and presentation copies, together with an important collection of bibliography, was sold at the Anderson Galleries, January 5, 6 and 7, 857 lots bringing $14,507.50, making a total of $150,229 for the entire library, the record sale of the season up to this date.

A few of the more interesting and valuable lots and the prices realized were the following:

Andrews (William Loring). "Among My Books," 8vo, cloth, New York, 1894. One of 10 Japan vellum copies, with author's presentation inscription. $52.50.

Andrews. "New Amsterdam, New Orange, New York," with illustrations and maps, 8vo, cloth, New York, 1897. One of 30 copies on Japan vellum and dedication copy. $60.

Andrews. "Gossip About Book Collecting," 2 vols., 8vo, Japan paper wrappers, New York, 1900. One of 32 copies on Japan vellum. $60.

Wise (J. T.). "The Ashley Library, a Catalogue of Printed Books, Manuscripts and Autograph Letters Collected by Thomas J. Wise," 4 vols., 4to, buckram, London, 1922-23. One of 200 copies. Purchaser to assume Mr. Chew's subscription and complete set. $105.

Bibliography. "The Library of William Andrews Clark, Jr.," collated and compiled by R. E. Cowan and William Andrews Clark, Jr., 13 vols., 4to, boards, San Francisco, 1920-22. One of 50 copies. $200.

Bibliography. "Catalogue of the Library of Robert Hoe," 4 vols., morocco by Bradstreet, New York, 1911-12. Anderson auction catalogue with prices. $40.

Bibliography. "Catalogue of the Library of the Late John Henry Wrenn," compiled by Harold B. Wrenn, 5 vols., 8vo, buckram, Austin, Texas, 1920. One of 120 copies. $200.

Carroll (Lewis). "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," 12mo, cloth, London, 1866. First edition. $180.

Bookplates. An almost complete collection of the bookplates engraved by E. D. French, the larger part proofs on Japan vellum and India paper, many signed, many plates showing several states, with some duplicates, 486 pieces. $130.

Grolier Club. David McN. Stauffer's "American Engravers Upon Copper and Steel," 2 vols., 8vo, boards, New York, 1907. One of 300 copies. $87.50.

Keats (John). "Poems," 12mo, elaborate levant morocco binding by Club Bindery, London, 1817. First edition. $570.

Keats. "Endymion," 8vo, half morocco, London, 1818. First edition. $390.

Keats. "Lamia," 12mo, morocco, by Bedford, London, 1820. First edition. $430.

Poe (Edgar Allan). "Tamerlane and Other Poems," facsimile of the first edition of 1827; together with a reprint of the 1845 edition, 2 vols., small 4to and folio, limp boards, San Francisco, 1923. Printed in a limited edition of 150 copies by John Henry Nash. $220.

SALE OF AMERICANA

AMERICANA, including selections from the libraries of the Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, John Brenton Copp of Mystic, Conn., with additions, was sold at the Anderson Galleries, January 9. A set of the first editions of Cook's "Voyages," 10 vols., London, 1773-88, first editions, brought $185; John Hubbard's "A Monumental Gratitude Attempted in a Poetical Relation of the Danger and Deliverance of Several Members of Yale-College in Passing the Sound from South-hold to New-Haven, Aug. 20th, 1726," 12mo, sewn, New-London, 1727, apparently the only copy ever offered at auction, $85; John Farmer's "The Emigrant's Guide," 18mo, leather, Albany, 1831, $45; Muller's "Voyages from Asia to America, for Completing the Discoveries of the North West Coast of America," 4to, calf, London, 1761, $77.50; John Reid's "The American Atlas," folio, New York, 1796, $31; and "A Sermon Preached on the Death of George Washington, Delivered in Stonington-Port, Connecticut, January 14th, 1800," by Clark Brown, Stonington-Port, 1800, rare, $52.50.

"ONE THOUSAND BEST BOOKS"

AS the "fruit of twenty years of living and working among books and readers," Asa Don Dickinson, librarian of the University of Pennsylvania, has prepared an annotated list of "One Thousand Best Books," which with its commentary, notes, and references fills a volume of some 400 pages. It is further described as "the household guide to a lifetime's reading," and on a sub-title page phrased in antique manner it is called "A Variorum List, that is to Say a Noble Literarie Garlande Assembled from Numberless Nosegayes Plucked by Many Scholars of Pleasing Taste, and Vaste Erudition, the Whole Woven Cunningly Together by a Patient Drudge, one Asa Don Dickinson, now Bibliothecarie to the Universitie of Pensilvania." Beginning with Thomas à Kempis and ending with Emile Zola, Mr. Dickinson's list ranges through the world's literature. The authors are listed first by dates, then by nationality, again by endorsements with classification by subjects, and a final index of titles and lists of one hundred best books to be read during each year from 1925 to 1934. Booklovers are under great obligations to Mr. Dickinson for this book. The volume is published by Doubleday, Page & Co.

NOTE AND COMMENT

THE State of Massachusetts has created the Walden Pond Reservation, including Walden Pond, Concord, made famous by association with Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau.

Joseph Conrad is the subject of the latest booklet in Doubleday, Page & Co.'s series of autobiographical sketches. It contains a concise account of the author and his works and a complete bibliography.

Part VI of the library of the late William F. Gable of Altoona, Penn., was sold at the American Art Galleries, January 8 and 9, 1,020 lots bringing $15,080, the total of this and last season's sales amounting to $135,171.

Through the generosity of a group of friends of Harvard under the leadership of John B. Stetson, Jr., who happened to be in Paris, when the library of Edouard Maura, rich in French rarities of various periods and branches of literature, came into the market, the collection was purchased and presented to Harvard Library. This collection fills many gaps in the library's collection of French literature and makes an addition of great value.

Volume XVII, Part I, of the "Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America" has been issued to members of the society. It contains papers by Captain Bainbridge Colby, U. S. A., on "Bibliography as an Aid to Biography"; "The Guide to Historical Literature," by Professor George M. Dutcher; "A Bibliography of Thomas Pringle's 'Afar in the Desert,' by George W. Robinson; and descriptions of the Ehrardt Faust collection at Yale University, the Flach collection of the University of Missouri, and the several special collections in the University of Texas.

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GENERAL ITEMS

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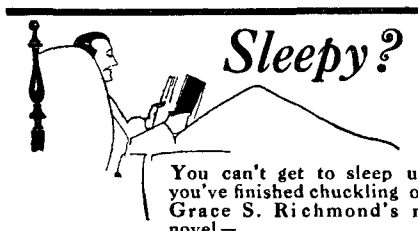

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The Phoenix Nest

IN August it will be five years since we actually began our labors in the field of books and we have perceived of late months a certain mustiness creeping over our attitude toward them. We no longer taste them with the relish that was ours of old. We no longer read anything avidly or kindle with the enthusiasms we once entertained. The critical afterthought is always with us and the deadening feeling that we ought to analyze a book's particular significance.

Doggone it! We don't really care an iota *what* the significance of a book is, if we enjoy its spirit and texture,—neither do we like critically to pick to pieces those volumes to which we feel ourselves temperamentally akin. What we really desire, and seem to have lost, is the actual enjoyment of reading, the utterly irresponsible absorption in some fiction or poetry which we probably should not be perusing at the time. Ah! There it is! "Probably should not"—that was the element of spice in our reading which made it so enjoyable of old! There is nothing like forbidden fruit! Any hoary moralist notwithstanding, forbidden fruit possesses a far finer relish than any other.

In the days when we were so employed that the reading of a published book could not possibly be regarded as a part of our job at the office, how eagerly we read in the lunch hour, on trains, in subways, how many an interval in the day's occupation was filled by surreptitious dippings into volumes concealed in a desk drawer! How vivid became certain characters and stories, how gay a double life we led! But today—we are free of the run of the shelves in office hours. We can settle down to any book openly and flagrantly, quieting our conscience simply by the reminder that we are really reading it in order to review it,—we can have the latest novels and volumes of poems piled upon our desk for hours without the slightest interference by the management. And we actually groan to open them! Their gaudiest jackets do not reawaken the old thrill. We are like the girl employed in the candy-store who can safely be trusted alone with any amount of candy. For the first week of her employment, perhaps, she was allowed—nay, enjoined, to eat just as much candy as she pleased. There was no difficulty with her appetite for candy thereafter!

Perhaps, then, at least 50% of our predilection for literature can be traced to an element of the nefarious connected with its pursuit. In school for instance, or in college, we were reading books when we should have been studying our lessons or listening to a lecturer. In the last lap of our "education" we developed an enthusiasm for the styles of Keats and Byron chiefly because, at the time, we should have been digesting solid chunks of history, economics, astronomy, and zoology. We liked to try our hand at writing because tittat-toe became a dull game on the benches of a lecture hall and the creations of our own fancy seemed more properly to adorn the pages of a class note-book than the solemn words of our instructor or an arid waste of dates and formulae. Through life we have been hounded by a desire to be doing something quite different from what we should be doing at the time.

Nearly five years at books—and now we have so thoroughly mulled over all the generalizations you can make about literature, we have seen so many authors rise and fall, we have stood waist-deep so long in the tide of volumes of all kinds, that we regard even the cleverest inventions of our own day with an oysterish eye. Maybe, if we were really a civil engineer or a subway guard we should be writing brilliant reviews or extraordinary stories. We can remember the time when the idea of our ever sitting at a desk in an editorial office, surrounded by the latest books, would have seemed to us the most fortunate situation possible in an excessively peculiar world. And we occasionally meet young men today whose eyes brighten and whose pulses leap at any mention of a like possibility. And we recall how, in our early days in New York, we once lunched at the Brevoort with a magazine editor who then seemed to us one of the elect of God's providence—and the vast bewilderment with which we heard his measured advice, "Don't be a magazine editor! Don't!"

If not deluged by books, that man was similarly deluged by manuscripts. He lived all day, as we live today, with the concoctions of other peoples' brains—dumped on him by the ton. He had consequently completely lost any relish for reading. Probably he sat at his high office-building window dreaming of the fun he might have had if he had gone into the Army, become a South American explorer, or done something with test-tubes in a laboratory. As for us, the cloak and suit business might have made us a real writer!

So we are contemplating a pretense. We are seriously thinking of loading our desk with all sorts of paraphernalia of the busy business man, making our corner of the office look as much as possible like the cubicle of a dominant executive, having several disconnected telephones and dictaphones into which we can shout instructions and dictate letters, hiring people to come in and "talk turkey" to us about "big propositions," decorating our oak with buzzer buttons, our blotter (under plate glass) with striking memoranda, and our walls with spiffy injunctions like "Do It Now!", "Keep Smiling!", "Time Is Money!" and so forth. Change the atmosphere and you change all! If we had a few hundred charts and estimates and knotty problems of how to cover what territory and when to install a new process and—so on—to tackle, we can imagine the gusto with which, in the very midst of this strident press of affairs, we would thievishly slide open the lower left-hand desk drawer, quietly extract from it a cherished volume, gently—glancing over our shoulder—elevate our feet to the slide-rest of the desk, settle back with a sigh of contentment, and for once, and after long years, really thoroughly enjoy the latest work of one of our contemporary novelists or poets!

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